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U.S. Consultative Commission Meeting Ends

LD0603175891 Moscow TASS in English 1426 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Geneva March 6 TASS—A regular session of the Soviet-American Permanent Consultative Commission ended here today.

The commission was set up in keeping with the Soviet-American memorandum on December 21, 1972 to promote the goals and provisions of the agreements on strategic arms limitation and measures to reduce the danger of a nuclear war, concluded between the Soviet Union and the United States.

The Soviet and American representatives agreed to hold the commission's next session in Geneva on July 16, 1991.

Yazov, UK's Major Discuss Arms Issues

LD0603231291 Moscow World Service in English 2000 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] During his brief working visit to Moscow on 5 February [as heard], the British Prime Minister, John Major, had a meeting with the Soviet Defense Minister, Dmitriy Yazov, and some of the top military officials. At the end of the meeting its participants were interviewed by our reporter, Aleksandr Yakovlev.

[Begin recording] [Yakovlev] There is nothing surprising about the desire of the prime minister, who had a very packed schedule, to meet representatives of the Soviet high military command. After all, too much in relations between states depends on the correlation of forces and the intentions of the sides in the military field. During the meeting the two sides discussed how consistent the Soviet Union was in its desire to cut its armed forces and armaments and curtail its military activities, the Soviet Union's idea about the role and place of the armed forces in the event of the emergence of a crisis situation, and what positions and how far the views of the Soviet military leadership disagreed with those of the British military department and the British leadership.

The situation in the Gulf area was also among the issues covered during the talks. The Soviet side declared that it was satisfied with the results of its talks with the British prime minister, who stressed his readiness to understand the position and arguments of the Soviet military leaders on questions under review, on the reduction of conventional weapons in Europe above all. Marshal Dmitriy Yazov said the following:

[Yazov, in Russian, fading into English translation] The main issue under discussion, Marshal Yazov said, were matters relating to the negotiations on conventional weapons in Europe. The British have a certain misunderstanding concerning what we've done and are doing in that field, the marshal noted. We have no differences on this issue with the British, he added, but, Marshal Yazov went on, Britain's idea about the number of our weapons failed to correspond with what we have in reality.

That's why we tried to explain what steps we took towards reducing our arms and when. During the three year-long arms reduction negotiations, we've pulled out more than half of our troops from Hungary and Czechoslovakia. We embarked on the elimination of what was termed as a so-called tank fist [as heard]. Where could we concentrate all this equipment? Naturally some of it we replaced and moved. We introduced most modern equipment and destroyed the old ones. We tried to explain all this in detail to the British side, Dmitriy Yazov said.

When we asked to what extent the two sides touched upon the Gulf situation, Marshal Yazov said the following:

That question topped our agenda, said Marshal Yazov. The Persian crisis [as heard] has shown that when an aggressor commits an act of aggression, the international community will succeed only if it acts in a single front. Marshal Yazov went on to say that if a settlement was to be achieved in the Persian Gulf area this could be done only through the use of the United Nations' organizations and the Security Council's efforts. The Soviet side believes that no others levers are available.

The British prime minister shared with our reporter his impressions of the meeting at the Soviet Defense Ministry. He said this in part:

[Major] I had a very enjoyable meeting with General [as heard] Yazov. I would not have missed it for the world. We had, I think it was extremely useful, extremely useful, extremely worthwhile, we were able to exchange ideas on a whole range of matters and the Persian Gulf included, and it is the sort of meeting that it is extremely valuable for us to have from time to time. I look forward to seeing the marshal back in England where he will be very welcome. [end recording]

Foreign Ministry's Churkin Gives News Briefing

Belonogov's Talks in Tehran, Vienna

LD0603150991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1414 GMT 6 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondents Aleksandr Kanishchev and Sergey Postanogov]

[Text] Moscow, 6 Mar (TASS)—Vitaliy Churkin, head of the Foreign Ministry Information Directorate, speaking at a news briefing today, said that Aleksandr Belonogov, deputy USSR foreign minister, has arrived in Tehran. The main aim of his trip to Tehran is for consultations with Iranian officials, which have already begun, the diplomat added.

"This visit is being made in the context of the wide-ranging consultations that we are holding with many interested parties, which we intend to continue in the near future in connection with the task of reaching a settlement in the Persian Gulf and of creating a security structure in the Gulf, and also with the wider tasks of a Near East settlement," the diplomat said to help explain the aims of Aleksandr Belonogov's trip.

Answering a journalist, Vitaliy Churkin categorically rejected the supposition of a "direct link" betwen this trip and the situation in Iraq, especially in its internal regions [as received]. "There is no such direct link," he said.

According to the diplomat, Aleksandr Belonogov will return to Moscow from Tehran.

Turning to Belonogov's conversation yesterday in Vienna with Alois Mock, minister of foreign affairs of Austria, Vitaliy Churkin stressed that the main subject of their talks was the situation in the Persian Gulf area, the prospects for its evolution, and the situation in the Near East as a whole. The ground-breaking role played on a political level by the United Nations in restoring justice and international law and order, and in giving Kuwait back its sovereignty and independence, was noted in particular, the diplomat continued. It was stressed that the United Nations and the Security Council, of which Austria is chairman, are called upon to take the most active and constructive part in turning this explosive region of the world into a zone of stability, neighborliness, and mutually advantageous cooperation.

A speedy solution to the ongoing Arab-Israel conflict, along with a definitive solution to the Kuwait crisis, must be one of the most important components of a future security system in the region, Vitaliy Churkin noted.

Gulf Security; Kuwait Envoy Return

LD0603155891 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1415 GMT 6 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondents Aleksandr Kanishchev and Sergey Postanogov]

[Text] Moscow, 6 Mar (TASS)—One of the main topics at today's briefing by Vitaliy Churkin, head of the USSR Foreign Ministry Information Directorate, was the post crisis settlement of the situation in the Persian Gulf region, and in the Near East as a whole. At the request of journalists, the USSR Foreign Ministry spokesman elucidated the Soviet Union's attitude to the problem of renewing arms supplies to Iraq and other countries of the region. "I will say only that it seems to me, that the well-known UN Security Council resolution continues to be in force, Churkin said. Nobody has currently raised the question of whether some countries should unilaterally assume the obligation never to supply weapons to one or another Near East country such as Iraq.

"On a broader level, the diplomat went on, President Mikhail Gorbachev has said—and such statements have been made by us at various levels before this—that in the process of a settlement in the Persian Gulf and in the Near East, very serious attention must be paid to putting order into the trade and supply of arms, so that an arms race or race in the sale of arms to the countries of the Near East region will not arise again. We imagine that it is in this wider context that the problems connected with the export and supply of arms to the countries of the Near East region, including Iraq, will be tackled."

"Of course, how to save this area from the threat of the use of weapons of mass destruction, including chemical weapons, remains a very important and urgent problem: All this must be discussed between the parties involved. We are ready for this," the Foreign Ministry spokesman added.

Speaking about Moscow's attitude toward cooperating with the six countries of the Persian Gulf region, and also Syria and Egypt, in the matter of a further settlement in the Gulf zone, and ensuring peace and security of this area, Vitaliy Churkin expressed the opinion that "The countries of this region must play a leading role in the creation of a structure of security and peace in the Persian Gulf."

The Foreign Ministry spokesman announced that Soviet ambassador Zverev, who for the last seven months has been in Moscow, will return to Kuwait in the near future. He was unable to name the precise date of the ambassador's return, stressing only that "a political decision on his return in the near future has been made."

In answer to a question as to whether the problem of granting political asylum to Saddam Husayn in India had been discussed during the latest contacts in Moscow between the Indian ambassador to the USSR and USSR Foreign Minstry representatives, Vitaliy Churkin said that, though at present he has no information on meetings with the Indian ambassador, he doubts that such a topic could be discussed by the Soviet and Indian sides.

Team Spirit 91, Need for Restraint

LD0603155191 Moscow TASS in English 1457 GMT 6 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondents Aleksandr Kanishchev and Sergey Postanogov]

[Text] Moscow March 6 TASS—"The American-South Korean Team Spirit-91 military exercises, as well as armed incidents in the Demilitarised Zone, tend to increase instability on the Korean peninsula and have already resulted in the suspension of the dialogue between the prime ministers of North and South Korea," chief of the Soviet Foreign Ministry Information Directorate Vitaliy Churkin told a briefing here today.

The Soviet spokesman expressed the hope that all the sides concerned would display "restraint and good will" in order to find ways to reduce tension on the peninsula.

Soviet-U.S. Summit, Baker Visit

LD0603160491 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1458 GMT 6 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondents Aleksandr Kanischev and Sergey Postanogov]

[Text] Moscow, 6 Mar (TASS)—According to Vitaliy Churkin, head of the USSR Foreign Ministry's information directorate, the timescale and agreed status of high-level Soviet-U.S. contacts planned for the first half of the year remain unchanged.

Replying to questions from journalists during a briefing here today, the USSR Foreign Ministry spokesman stressed first of all that the nature of Soviet-U.S. relations "have long been such that the sides work out the agenda" of any meetings "jointly." Speaking in this regard on the forthcoming Soviet-U.S. summit meeting, Vitaliy Churkin stated that "the situation with the summit remains the same as at the end of January, when it was announced in Washington that the meeting would not take place in February for well-known reasons, but would be held during the first half of this year by mutual accord between the two presidents." He also stressed that the planned "status of the meeting" was also still absolutely unchanged. "The status remains as it was announced at that time—without any variations," the diplomat said.

Going on to the visit to Moscow by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker planned for 14-16 March, Vitaliy Churkin expressed hope that his arrival will provide an opportunity for discussing the broadest range of issues. In particular, he believes that great attention will be devoted to an exchange of views on the creation of a security structure in the Persian Gulf and to a Near East settlement, "also taking into account, of course, that Baker will be arriving in Moscow on completion of his tour of the countries in the region."

"Obviously," Vitaliy Churkin continued, "the entire complex of Soviet-U.S. relations will also be examined, due attention will be devoted to putting finishing touches to the treaty on strategic offensive weapons, on which the experts are still working. The task of completing the preparation of this treaty remains on the joint agenda of the Soviet-U.S. dialogue."

The diplomat expressed the view that issues on a broader plane will also be discussed—the development of Soviet-U.S. cooperation, regional problems, and also purely bilateral issues. In the view of the Soviet Foreign Minsitry spokesman, the forthcoming talks with the U.S. secretary of state in Moscow will generally be "very full."

Comments on Bangladesh Elections

LD0603160291 Moscow TASS in English 1504 GMT 6 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondents Aleksandr Kanishchev and Sergey Postonogov]

[Text] Moscow March 6 TASS—"The Soviet Union welcomes the news of the successful completion of general parliamentary elections in Bangladesh," Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman Vitaliy Churkin told a briefing here today.

Churkin wished success to the process of democratisation in that country and the work of the lawfully elected parliament.

He expressed hope that Soviet-Bangladesh relations will receive fresh impetus after the formation of a new government in Dhaka in the interests of creating an atmosphere of security and stability in Asia and the world at large.

Boosting Relations With Thailand

LD0603153891 Moscow TASS in English 1520 GMT 6 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondents Aleksandr Kanishchev and Sergey Postanogov]

[Text] Moscow March 6 TASS—"We are interested in not only maintaining positive tendencies in Soviet-Thai relations but in boosting them," Soviet Foreign [Ministry] spokesman Vitaliy Churkin told a briefing today.

He said that lately the Soviet Union has been steadily and constructively developing and improving bilateral ties with Thailand in many fields.

As a result, both countries have intensified bilateral political contacts, including visits by Soviet and Thai premiers and a visit to the Soviet Union by members of the royal family.

The USSR and Thailand have identical or similar approaches to many international issues, Churkin said.

He stressed Thailand's constructive role in solving the Cambodian issue and expressed hope that recent events in Thailand will not affect its settlement.

Central America Consultations

LD0603184691 Moscow TASS in English 1612 GMT 6 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondents Aleksandr Kanishchev and Sergey Postanogov]

[Text] Moscow March 6 TASS—Valeriy Nikolayenko, the head of the Latin America Department at the Soviet Foreign Ministry, held consultations with U.S. Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs Bernard Aronson, Soviet Foreign Ministry Spokesman Vitaliy Churkin told a briefing today.

Nikolayenko and Aronson praised the present state of regular political consultations and a high level of their trustfulness and mutual understanding.

They also stressed the need for a further development of Soviet-U.S. Cooperation in Central America, including the settlement in El Salvador.

Churkin drew the journalists's attention to the fact that the Soviet Union had confirmed its principled position as regards Aronson's question about the recent discovery of Soviet weapons in Honduras, which Honduran rebels allegedly received from Sandinistas.

"Our position is that weapons supplied to Nicaragua under an agreement on military cooperation with this country cannot be handed over to a third country without our consent," Churkin said.

He noted that since the end of 1988 no arms supplies have been made to Nicaragua, while to other Latin American countries "Soviet weapons have never been and are not being supplied at all".

Churkin briefed the journalists on consultations held by Valeriy Nikolayenko at the Spanish Foreign Ministry in Madrid at the end of February.

The Soviet and Spanish sides reiterated their support for the dialogue between the government and the El Salvador National Liberation Front on a political settlement.

The USSR and Spain agreed to help intensify this process and create favorable conditions for its further development.

Churkin also dwelt upon questions pertaining to the promotion of a political settlement and the national reconciliation in Central America.

"It was noted that the USSR and Spain have similar approaches towards these issues, Churkin said.

Differing Views of Shevardnadze Association Aired

PM0503115391

[Editorial Report] Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 2 March 1991 Second Edition carries on page 5 under the rubric "At Your Request" and the headline "Diplomacy but... Without Protocol" a feature comprising a reader's letter, an editorial comment, and two articles, one by P. Bogomolov from Moscow, the other by V. Sukhoy from New York. The letter, signed A. Aleksandrov, a gas worker from Magnitogorsk, reads in full as follows:

"Recently I saw a television report on the creation of a foreign policy association in Moscow. At such a difficult time as this do we need yet another public organization with its own staff, real estate, foreign currency funds, and so on? And another point: Are there similar associations abroad and, if so, what do they do?"

The PRAVDA commentary notes that the "editorial mailbag has received quite a few letters asking similar questions," and it provides answers in the form of correspondent reports from Moscow and New York. Bogomolov's Moscow report reads in full as follows:

"On the day in question the old building on Yelizarova Street, a quiet street in Moscow, was crammed with journalists, photographers, and video crews. E.A. Shevardnadze, until recently USSR foreign minister, was due to appear in the conference hall at any moment. We were approaching the vital moment of the creation of the Foreign Policy Association [FPA], a public association dedicated to studying the problems of international relations at the nongovernment level.

"To pass the time while awaiting the organizers of the founding meeting, correspondents from all over the world talked about its tasks.

"'The FPA has clearly been inspired by those at the top,' colleagues from some of the new Moscow publications said with a grin. 'The aim is to convince the West that all is well with those ministers of ours who have retired but who still enjoy prestige in the eyes of foreigners, and that they are respected.'

"'Stuff and nonsense!' the ideological opponents of the 'democrats' replied. 'The center has nothing to do with it. Quite the contrary, this association is—to spite the tall building on Smolensk Square—a kind of shadow Foreign Ministry ready... to take foreign policy into its own hands after the present government is removed from power.'(!)

"Well, conjecture is one thing but the FPA's real tasks were listed at the meeting itself. The speakers who addressed the meeting rightly noted that similar associations have existed in a number of foreign countries for a long time now and that their work is of benefit to society.

"Take, for example, the independent (and often highly critical) expert analysis of the government's foreign policy decisions. Or, say, contacts with foreign counterparts that are independent of narrow departmental interests and short-term considerations. And all these things, apparently, are within their capabilities. After all, these organizations are staffed not by dilettantes incapable of treating international themes seriously but experienced diplomats, lawyers, and public figures with many years' professional activity behind them...

"The leading organs of the Soviet Foreign Policy Association are held in equally high esteem. By the way, its organizers have no intention of directing their practical activity against the Foreign Ministry or indeed anyone or anything at all. The FPA's aim is the fruitful development of international dialogue as a whole.

"...After listening to and approving the statutory document in general outline, the representatives of the constituent collectives (there are already over 30, ranging from the diplomatic academy to the Khrunichev plant) voted unanimously for Shevardnadze's election as president of the association. He in his speech also defined the FPA's main aim at the present stage: to preserve and multiply the achievements of the policy of new thinking.

"And as for the FPA's financial status, I can reassure the reader that the state budget has no part to play here. All hopes are pinned on help from the association's collective members.

"I admit that we journalists would very much like the building at 10-12 Yelizarova Street to be a much sought-after address both for the Soviet and foreign press."

The remainder of the feature comprises correspondent V. Sukhoy's New York dispatch. He describes the work of the U.S. counterpart to the FPA, the Council on International Relations, which was founded in 1921 and which enjoys "considerable prestige in U.S. Government circles." Sukhoy quotes Peter Tarnoff, president of the U.S. organization, who says:

"We received with satisfaction the news of the creation in the Soviet Union of a foreign policy association headed by former USSR Foreign Minister Shevardnadze. We hope that the association will be a platform for the new thinking and an influential and prestigious organization to which your country's leaders will pay heed."

Integration With World Economic Bodies Viewed

LD0603192191 Moscow TASS in English 1528 GMT 6 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondents Sergey Postanogov and Sergey Riabikin]

[Text] Moscow March 6 TASS—One of the first tasks set by perestroyka before the country was the integration of the Soviet Union in the world economic structures. However, the USSR has not gone very far from the previous conditions of exchange with other countries, Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Ernest Obminskiy told participants in the meeting of representatives of social and political organisations here today.

According to Obminskiy, many financial and economic problems facing the Soviet Union could be easily solved through joining international organisations, such as the International Monetary Fund, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. These international organisations have proved their viability in regulating 80 per cent of the world commodity turnover. Joining these organisations could help the Soviet Union streamline its foreign economic relations, as economic ties within the country.

So far, the Soviet Union has been granted observer rights in the GATT, which enables it to attend sessions, receive materials and learn, as well as promulgate legislation within the country needed for the Soviet Union to become fully-fledged member. As regards membership in the World Monetary Fund and the World Bank, Obminskiy said, the Soviet Union has not officially applied for membership, although there has been rapprochement with these organizations recently.

Responding to questions from participants, Obminskiy said that the Soviet Union's foreign debt equals about 60 billion dollars. State guaranteed credits are being repaid faultlessly. But there are arrears in repaying credits to foreign firms. These difficulties have resulted not only from the fall in oil prices but also from the fact that our financial policy in the past was not pragmatic in character.

The deputy minister said 1991 is likely to be a very dramatic year for the country's credit situation but stressed that the Soviet Union's potential is great.

Obminskiy told participants that representatives of Comecon member countries were due to meet in Moscow on March 14 to discuss future cooperation.

United States & Canada

Military Doctrine Issue 'Particularly Acute'

LD0603170491 Moscow TASS in English 1626 GMT 6 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Vladimir Smelov]

[Text] Vienna March 6 TASS—A regular plenary meeting of parties to the Vienna talks on confidence-building measures and security in Europe focused today on the holding of a seminar on military doctrines. It is to be attended by top military leaders from CSCE states.

Several speakers stressed that the seminar brooked no delay, since the situation on the continent was changing rapidly to the tune of political reforms in European countries. They said it was important to "synchronise" the process of reforms in the military domain with positive processes in other areas of inter-state relations.

The following argument in favour of the seminar's speedy convocation was advanced: Much time is needed by the general staffs of CSCE states to make preparations for the discussion of concrete problems at the seminar, especially at a time when many parties to the negotiations are busy reassessing their doctrines. This is why it is necessary to reach agreement quickly on the terms of the seminar and to draw up its agenda.

The Soviet delegation has advanced several preliminary considerations, which boil down to the following: The problem of military doctrines has become particularly acute after the Warsaw Treaty military organisation was dissolved. The east European states are actively seeking new ways to ensure their national security, ranging from rapprochement with NATO to neutrality. In these conditions, the Soviet Union will also be guided by the national doctrine in shaping its defense policy. This doctrine will have to be ammended correspondingly. It is planned, among other things, not only to perpetuate, but further increase its defensive orientation.

Furthermore, the changes that have now occurred suggest a basically new approach to the assessment of the only remaining European military alliance—NATO. This is why the Soviet side expects the bloc's leadership to grasp the new military-political situation on the continent and take measures to implement the concept of all-European security. The Soviet Union also believes it is high time to get down to the practical elaboration of defense sufficiency criteria. Further promotion of the European disarmament process is unthinkable without them.

Commentary Views U.S.-Soviet Cooperation

LD0503145391 Moscow World Service in English 1210 GMT 5 Mar 91

[Commentary by Mikhail Mayorov]

[Text] The American Secretary of State James Baker's visit to Moscow, expected within the next few days, sets new guidelines for Soviet-American cooperation. Since last August, the two powers have been cooperating in adopting and implementing the well known UN Security Council resolutions to end the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait. The moment has come to jointly set up lasting security structures in the Arab region, where so far one conflict has followed another, while Moscow and Washington have failed to find a common language for a complex settlement of the problems.

The Gulf crisis has rather changed the mentality of many politicians, notes our commentator Mikhail Mayorov. At the Soviet-American summit in Helsinki, Mikhail Gorbachev and George Bush agreed that the United States would no longer block Soviet diplomatic activities in the Middle East. Now is the right time for cooperation between the two countries to play an important and even decisive role in the region. Much of what the two powers have been doing so far can be wasted if there remains the danger of aggression similar to what we have just experienced. And then, during the days of the crisis, both Washington and Moscow rejected the linkage Saddam Husayn was pressing for between his actions and the solution of the Palestinian problem.

Now that the war is over does it mean that this constant source of tension can be forgotten once and for all? At this point the Soviet Union and the United States must certainly display maximum flexibility and restraint not to yield to stereotypes. After all, what is needed is an option that would meet the interests of the multifaceted Arab world and Israel. Naturally, not only Moscow and Washington but also West European and Arab countries will have their say. What can it be in the long run: a Middle Eastern version of the Helsinki process in Europe, or something else created by the specific features of the most explosive region in the world? We will have to wait and see, but the main thing for humanity is to have a new, peaceful order after healing this painful wound.

The chance that presents itself now can be called historic, given the difficulties ovecome by Moscow and Washington to reach the present level of understanding. And though their relations are still fragile, as President Gorbachev put it, even now it is possible to speak of the end of what had begun exactly 45 years ago, on 5 March 1946. On that day the then British prime minister, Winston Churchill, made his famous speech in Fulton, the United States, to launch the cold war. So now the event deserves to be mentioned not at all because it is 45 years old. A review of the past events from the present day positions makes it possible to better evaluate the opportunities that have come to the fore as the global confrontation has been abandoned and transition to cooperation on the world and regional levels initiated.

China

Ivashko Returns to Moscow After China Trip

PM0603165691 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 4 Mar 91 Second Edition p 6

[TASS report: "Back From Beijing"]

[Text] On 2 March V.A. Ivashko, deputy general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, completed his working visit to the PRC and returned to Moscow. He was met at the airport by O.S. Shenin, Politburo member and secretary of the CPSU Central Committee; G.V. Semenova, Politburo member and secretary of the CPSU Central Committee; V.M. Falin, secretary of the CPSU Central Committee; and Yu Hongliang, PRC ambassador to the USSR.

Ivashko Interviewed on Visit

OW0703061491 Moscow International Service in Mandarin 2200 GMT 4 Mar 91

[Interview with Ivashko, deputy general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee by Marchenko; place and date not given—recorded; in Russian with superimposed Mandarin translation]

[Text] [Marchenko] To put it fairly, a senior CPSU leader's visit to China is a major event transcending the scope of party-to-party relations. In your opinion, to what extent has your visit to China promoted Soviet-Chinese relations?

[Ivashko] The Soviet and Chinese people have had friendly and cooperative relations for decades. There was a period of estrangement and even confrontation in the relations between our two countries. However, this was in the past. We believe that period is gone forever. After Gorbachev visited China in May 1989, relations between our two countries began to develop rapidly. During my visit to China, I held talks with Comrade Jiang Zemin and Qiao Shi, member of the Standing Committee of the CPC Central Committee Political Bureau; I also met with leaders of Chinese party organizations and state organs, as well as with leaders of enterprises and labor organizations. All this shows that since the normalization of our relations, noticeable progress has been made in ties between our two countries. I think my visit to China represents another step forward along this road.

[Marchenko] Many problems solved by China in the course of economic reform are of immediate significance to our country. In your opinion, how useful are China's experiences to our country?

[Ivashko] I am opposed to blindly copying experiences of the United States, China, or European countries. It should be understood that each country has its specific conditions. One country can only learn from the experiences of another but cannot mechanically copy the pattern of another. On this point, we should pay close attention to China's experiences. Unlike many economists in our country who are inclined toward the West, I think that both China's negative and positive experiences are of significance to the Soviet Union. The question is that the economies of the Western countries have taken shape, which are capitalist. Economically, China, like the Soviet Union, is in the reform stage. Particularly, the reforms in the Soviet Union and China have a common tendency, that is, to bring the potential of socialism into fuller play. The people of our two countries are opening up a road in this direction. We hope that our two countries help supply each other's needs. The Chinese side also believe that exchanging experiences are beneficial to both sides.

[Marchenko] You learned during your visit to China that China was willing to provide commodity credit for the Soviet Union.

[Ivashko] I think this friendly action by Chinese comrades has economic as well as great political significance. We hold that this initiative by Chinese leaders is a manifestation of their moral support for the Soviet Union experiencing hardships. Within the limits of the credit, China will provide us with 1 billion Swiss francs worth of foodstuffs and (?daily necessities). Now relevant experts are discussing the categories of commodities to be supplied over how long a period.

[Marchenko] According to reports, during your meeting with Jiang Zemin, you also discussed with him his forthcoming visit to the Soviet Union.

[Ivashko] We believe that the forthcoming visit to the Soviet Union by Jiang Zemin, general secretary of the CPC Central Committee, will make it possible for us to raise Soviet-Chinese relations to a new level. During our talks in China, we understood that there are all prerequisites for this. The CPSU and the CPC have identical or very similar views on most issues of domestic and foreign policies. Both sides pointed this out with satisfaction. The date for Comrade Jiang Zemin's visit to the Soviet Union has yet to be set, but it is expected to take place within the first half of this year. I wish to take this opportunity to point out that the Soviet Union is looking forward to Comrade Jiang Zemin's visit and will accord the distinguished Chinese guest the warmest hospitality.

Qian Qichen's East European Tour Viewed

OW0703074191 Moscow International Service in Mandarin 1000 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Commentary by Nikolayev; from the "Current Events and Commentaries" Program]

[Text] The final stop of the Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen's trip to East Europe is Hungary. Our station observer Nikolayev said:

China always has attached great importance to its relations with Poland, Bulgaria, and Hungary. China normalized its relations with what was then known as the "big family of socialist nations" during the 1980's. However, the names of these countries now have not only changed, but their politics, economies, and social life have also undergone very great changes. As everyone knows, China watches developments in these countries very closely. It is very eager to find out whether changes in East Europe will have adverse effects on bilateral relations, and what the principles and bases for future bilateral relations will be.

In view of this fact, one could say that the Chinese foreign minister is trying to become acquainted with old friends in Poland, Bulgaria, and Hungary. It was not surprising that reports about Qian Qichen's talks with officials in Warsaw, Sofia, and Budapest all stated that they had exchanged views in details and held briefings on each other's domestic situation. During their talks, both sides held that they should not let domestic problems influence international relations. They should solve their domestic problems on their own, and there should not be any interference for outside. During these talks, they also emphasized the expansion of bilateral relations on all fronts, based on equality and mutual benefits, and in the light of realities and potential in their own countries.

The trip by the Chinese foreign minister clearly indicated that there are some problems in the relations between China and the three countries. For example, the volume of trade has dropped sharply, and East Europe is longing for direct contacts with Hong Kong and Taiwan. The press also reported that Polish President Walesa may visit Taiwan. During their talks, Walesa and Qian Qichen stressed that, in principle, the position of Poland is that there is only one China and that is the People's Republic of China. The Chinese side stated that Beijing does not object to other nations having unofficial contacts with Taiwan. However, the situation is different if these contacts are of a political nature.

Observers argued that the Chinese foreign minister's trip to the three East European countries has been successful. The talks showed that both sides are interested in cooperation and in resolving existing problems.

Northeast Asia

Chief Editor Frolov Visits Akita, Japan

PM0603165091 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 4 Mar 91 Second Edition p 6

[Correspondent I. Latyshev report: "Warm Meetings in Akita"]

[Text] Akita, 3 Mar—The city of Akita, on the shores of the Sea of Japan in the northern part of Honshu Island, is considered "remote" in Japan. However, the city authorities and public are reluctant to accept this situation. They have decided that the surest path to progress lies in orientation toward intensive ties with the Soviet Union, whose shores are not so far away, only 600 km. Hence the friendly attitude toward Soviet people and the ardent desire to establish lasting, good-neighborly contacts with them. That is why, in the days preceding USSR President M.S. Gorbachev's visit to Japan, the public in Akita greeted so warmly and cordially their guest, Academician I.T. Frolov, member of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo and chief editor of PRAVDA.

Interviews with I.T. Frolov were published in the local press and transmitted on the city television network. He had a meeting with the mayor and other local public leaders. In their speeches the participants in the meeting spoke of the importance of developing Japanese-Soviet good-neighborliness. Much attention was devoted to the development of business and cultural cooperation between the city and nearby regions of the Soviet Far East. There was talk, in particular, of plans to establish air communications between Akita and Vladivostok and Khabarovsk, of inviting Soviet students to study at the city's university, and of organizing familiarization trips to the Soviet Union by tourist groups and delegations from local business circles.

A cordial reception was accorded to the Soviet guest by the administration of the "Nippon SMT" company's semiconductors production plant, whose output is supplied to enterprises in Japan and the United States.

I.T. Frolov gave a public lecture, "A New Stage in Japanese-Soviet Relations: Hopes and Opportunities." After the lecture there was a 90-minute discussion, in which the participants spoke with approval of the Soviet leadership's course of radical reforms in the USSR's economic, political, and state structure, stressing the need for the all-around widening of contacts between the inhabitants of Akita and the population of Soviet Far Eastern cities.

I.T. Frolov's meetings with the Akita public revealed the great interest of the city's inhabitants, and of the population of the whole of Japan's west coast, in good-neighborly ties with the Soviet Union. It was no accident that during these days the idea became current of transforming the Sea of Japan into a "lake of peace and friendship," whose banks would be a region of fruitful economic and cultural cooperation among the peoples of Japan, the Soviet Union, and other countries of the region. This idea is, of course, fully in accordance with the interests of our compatriots who live in the Soviet Far East.

Completes Visit, Lecture Tour

PM0603150591 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 5 Mar 91 Second Edition p 5

[PRAVDA correspondent I. Latyshev report: "Visit Over"]

[Text] Tokyo, 4 Mar—The visit to Japan by Academician I.T. Frolov, member of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo and editor in chief of PRAVDA, has ended.

During his week in Japan I.T. Frolov had numerous meetings with prominent statesmen, parliamentarians, leaders of the business world, scientists, and journalists. In Tokyo and Akita the Soviet guest gave public lectures to large audiences devoted to the problems of Soviet domestic life and foreign policy and also to the contemporary state of and prospects for the development of Soviet-Japanese relations. These lectures were accompanied by symposiums and scientific debates during which ways of strengthening business cooperation and good-neighborly ties between Japan and the USSR were discussed. The mass media here paid great attention to I.T. Frolov's visit. Several interviews with the Soviet guest were carried on Japanese television, while a number of others were published in the country's central and local newspapers.

Yesterday evening the Soviet guest had his final meeting in the center of Tokyo in one of the Palace Hotel's conference rooms with a group of representatives of the capital's public, including well-known scientific and cultural figures and newspapermen. The gathering listened very attentively to I.T. Frolov's speech in which he raised a number of theoretical issues linked with the Soviet Union's move to a market economy, reforms of the USSR's state and political structure, and the effect of perestroyka on the course of international events. In their speeches Japanese representatives pointed to the need to comprehensively develop Japanese-Soviet relations, stressing the exceptional historic significance of USSR President M.S. Gorbachev's coming visit to Japan in April 1991.

This morning I.T. Frolov had a conversation with senior Japanese Foreign Ministry officials during which they touched on certain issues of Soviet-Japanese relations. Today the Soviet guest left Tokyo for home. He was seen off at Narita International Airport by L.A. Chizhov, USSR ambassador to Japan.

MPRP Congress Begins in Ulaanbaatar

PM0603114591 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 26 Feb 91 Second Edition p 5

[Correspondent V. Sapov report: "Action Needed, Not Words; From the 20th MPRP Congress"]

[Text] Ulaanbaatar, 25 Feb—More than 400 delegates are representing the 120,000-strong detachment of Mongolian Communists at the scheduled 20th MPRP [Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party] Congress, which opened today. On the first day of work, MPRP Central Committee Chairman G. Ochirbat delivered a report, "The Sociopolitical Situation in Mongolia and the MPRP's Tasks." The head of the Soviet delegation—A.A. Malofeyev, member of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo and first secretary of the Belorussian Communist Party Central Committee—read a message of greeting to the congress.

Less than a year has passed since the extraordinary MPRP congress. Major changes have taken place in Mongolian society. The political report and speeches reflected understanding of the need for restructuring. The report assessed the path traveled by the party in its 70-year existence, analyzed the present sociopolitical situation in the country, and outlined ways and means of resolving urgent tasks.

We have assembled for our congress under the weight of the enormous trust and responsibility placed on our party by the Mongolian working people, G. Ochirbat said. When analyzing and assessing the past and present and determining our tasks for the future, we have tried to be guided by the collective reason of the party and the people.

The key issue is the concept of the party's restructuring and renewal. As was pointed out in the report, this concept has not arisen suddenly but has been developed gradually, step by step, since the third plenum (in 1987) of the MPRP Central Committee. Until the end of 1989, however, this work was making slow progress. Consequently, society concluded that carrying out restructuring and renewal solely "from above" was a path of development leading nowhere. The resignation of the upper echelons of leadership followed, and new people began running the country and the party.

What has been done since the extraordinary congress? The main tasks it set have been resolved. General democratic elections have been held. A new political system has been formed. The transition to a market system is under way, and different forms of ownership are being developed. The liberation of society's spiritual life is being accompanied by the revival of national cultural and historical traditions.

The party is not abandoning its strategic objectives. It was said from the congress tribune: "The MPRP has no doubts about its social choice."

Speakers said that many new, sometimes unforeseen problems are arising in the course of restructuring. So far, political parties, unions, and associations have mainly been fighting solely for the right to participate in the administration of the state. This has not led to a more stable situation in society and has aggravated the shortage of food and consumer goods. People are demanding real action.

So, what must be done? The first task, it was said at the congress, is to create the optimum structure for society's political system. There must be an efficient mechanism for collaboration between organs of state, parties, and political and social organizations. Only through joint effort will it be possible to correctly combine methods of economic and state regulation, strengthen socialist legality, and intensify the struggle against negative phenomena.

A great deal of attention was devoted to party policy in the economic sphere. The MPRP's main idea is to cut off all opportunity for exploitation and place the working man above all else. The party persistently recommends this idea to the government as the basis for its activity. As far as a solution to the crisis is concerned, the old economic system must be fundamentally broken. However, serious weakening of order and discipline is having a pernicious effect on production activity. The state budget deficit and unemployment are growing.

The congress participants paid keen attention to the problems of transferring to a market system. In particular, the government resolution adopted on this issue came in for some strong criticism from those at grassroots level. In addition to the development of private initiative and enterprise, the "shadow economy" is strengthening its positions. It was pointed out at the congress that this is eating away at the economic mechanism from within and leading the economy in the direction of collapse. The MPRP Central Committee submitted a proposal to the government on measures to resolve the crisis.

Social provision for the population is a serious question. Mongolia has a lot of large families, orphans, invalids, and people who have lost the ability to work. One must not forget students either, of course. It is not enough to establish a minimum standard of living: A comprehensive system of measures is needed.

Dwelling on the development of friendly relations and cooperation with the USSR, G. Ochirbat highly appraised bilateral summit meetings in Moscow. The MPRP will continue to develop and enrich Mongolian-Soviet relations—and interparty ties, in particular—with new, effective forms in line with the ideas of restructuring and renewal. Sweeping negation of the fruits of friendship and cooperation between the USSR and Mongolia is out of step with reality. The party will rebuff any attempts to cast a slur on Mongolian-Soviet cooperation.

Debates Summarized

PM0603165991 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 28 Feb 91 Second Edition p 4

[Correspondent V. Sapov report: "Policy of Not Surrendering Positions; 20th MPRP Congress Comes to a Close"]

[Text] Ulaanbaatar, 27 Feb—How is the country to be extricated from crisis? What must be done to galvanize the ruling party's activity? These basic questions were the center of attention at the 20th MPRP [Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party] Congress, which has just come to a close in Ulaanbaatar.

The discussion, which was distinguished by considered, constructive opinions, revealed similar and diametrically opposite points of view on ways to improve society's political structure.

The congress' work was crowned by a jubilee date—the 70th anniversary of the formation of the MPRP—celebrated on 1 March. The country's transition from centuries of feudal backwardness to a new life is associated with the name of Mongolia's ruling party. Participants in the forum said that a good start was made in 1921 with regard to rebuilding society. But later—particularly in the Stalinist period—there arose obstacles in the way of consistent progress. Although the MPRP investigated the causes of these obstacles at its extraordinary congress and checked its course against the compass of restructuring, the crisis has still not been fully overcome.

Congress delegates were unequivocal that the party needs to be renewed. They are concerned by its diminished authority and certainly are not demanding cosmetic repairs—they want to see radical restructuring and improvement of the style and methods of party work.

The MPRP Central Committee apparatus came in for some strong criticism: It has not only been unable to provide the ideological backup for restructuring; it has also adopted a passive, wait-and-see attitude in the face of the opposition, which is "charging into battle" and aims to squeeze the MPRP from the political scene.

Delegates spoke with concern of attempts to split the party. The MPRP was formed as the party of the working peasantry and the working class. It protects the interests of all strata of the population. No one is stopping anyone from expressing their point of view or leaving the party, it was noted from the rostrum. But blatant apostasy—when former party members launch sharp attacks on the MPRP—is dictated more by political ambition and a desire to settle scores.

Great debates flared up over the clause in the MPRP Statute that provides for the existence of different trends within the party. So a provision was adopted whereby any group holding a different point of view will only have the right to exist on the condition that it secures the support of no less than one-quarter of the congress delegates. This does have a logical framework: Speakers were of the opinion that trends and factions must not conduct activity designed to destroy the party's organizational unity.

Delegates said with pain that, in the conditions of establishing democracy and pluralism of opinions, negative phenomena are becoming widespread in the country: Sweeping negation of everything the Mongolian people have created over the past years, disrespect for the law, and tolerance of all kinds of extremes. This is weakening order, discipline, and civic responsibility, undermining people's faith in the future, and having a negative impact on the development of the national economy.

What are the MPRP's urgent tasks? In the opinion of various speakers, it must ensure political stability and overcome socioeconomic difficulties by rallying the joint efforts of all social forces and citizens in Mongolia. It must strengthen executive discipline and enhance the authority of party decisions.

The congress approved and ratified amendments and additions to the MPRP Program and Statute.

Southeast Asia & Pacific

Commentator on Chances for Cambodian Elections

BK0503052991 Moscow in Cambodian to Cambodia 1230 GMT 4 Mar 91

[Viktor Valentinov commentary]

[Text] Another conflict of international dimensions has erupted around the Cambodian issue due to the decision of the State of Cambodia to hold an election of the National Assembly in June 1992 in the event that a peaceful solution is not achieved by then. Concerning this matter, our observer, Comrade Viktor Valentinov, has the following comments:

First of all, let us talk about the decision of the Phnom Penh government. The outline of this decision has been brought to light by Comrade Hor Namhong, foreign minister of the State of Cambodia.

In general, Phnom Penh has accepted the UN plan, which opens the way for organizing a free election in the country under UN supervision. However, the opposition groups have not paid any attention to this plan. On the contrary, the opposition groups, particularly the Khmer Rouge faction, have been busily launching military offensives, an act that only complicates the ongoing efforts for a political solution.

However, Phnom Penh is always ready to resume negotiations with the opposition groups. If, in the future, these groups continue to use negotiations as a smokescreen for concealing their real design to seize power through force of arms, the Phnom Penh authorities will certainly be compelled to take action, such as by holding an election by its own forces.

It should be noted that the term of the present National Assembly of the State of Cambodia has already expired but was subsequently extended for another year. The opposition groups have regarded Phnom Penh's decision to hold this election as a step that will complicate a peaceful solution. Moreover, a spokesman of the PRC Foreign Ministry has accused the State of Cambodia Government of creating new obstacles on the road toward reaching a comprehensive solution. These obstacles, according to the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman, are created at a time when the international community is making vigorous efforts toward reaching a solution. Concerning this matter, our observer, Comrade Viktor Valentinov, has this opinion:

1. The entire international community has not contributed to these vigorous efforts. For example, the U.S. Government has just confessed that so-called strategic military cooperation has been established between the Pol Pot group and the two other Cambodian opposition groups that are the recipients of U.S. military aid. There is clear proof that U.S. arms have fallen into the hands of the Khmer Rouge forces whose activities are causing great concern to the Phnom Penh side. It would be better if, in implementing the spirit of the UN plan, the Washington administration were to halt its military aid to the Cambodian opposition groups. We think that the continuation of this aid can only encourage the Khmer Rouge to procrastinate on holding negotiations. On the contrary, the possibility of holding the election without the participation of the opposition groups could serve as a new incentive for negotiations, especially when the government of Comrade Hun Sen has clearly declared its readiness to continue the dialogue.

In this reagrd, let me talk about a circumstance. The present major obstacle is set by the stance of the Khmer Rouge group, which has continued to launch large-scale offensives against the State of Cambodia, while, as a show of its goodwill, Phnom Penh has ceased all offensive operations in this dry season.

It is the opposition groups, not the Phnom Penh side, which have persistently called for the rearrangement of the Supreme National Council's composition, which was already agreed upon following prolonged negotiations that lasted for over two months. It is Pol P[illegible] and his group that have kept pressuring their allies on the opposition side, thus hindering all constructive ideas and desires of these allies.

In my opinion, attention should be focused on all these obstacles. Only after these obstacles are eradicated can there be concrete prospects for an earliest accomplishment of a peaceful solution to the Cambodian problem, concluded our commentator, Comrade Viktor Valentinov.

Moscow on Burma's Role in Economic Cooperation

BK0303101991 Moscow in Burmese to Burma 1430 GMT 2 Mar 91

[Text] Dear listeners, Myanmar [Burma] has shown special interest in the recently concluded third meeting of Southeast Asian countries held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Delegations from ASEAN [Association of South East Asian Nations] nations, three Indochinese countries, and Myanmar attended the meeting. Radio Moscow commentator [name indistinct] presents the following:

The main topic of discussion, judging by the broad participation of many countries at the meeting, was the formation of a trade group in Southeast Asia as proposed by Malaysia in December of last year. China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and South Korea could also join this group apart from the nations participating at this meeting. The proposed name for the new association is the East Asian Economic Grouping. A basically similar proposal was introduced by the Japanese delegation back in 1979 which later developed into an Asia-Pacific economic group known as Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation [APEC]. However, the regions involved in Malaysia's proposal are comparatively less than the APEC. There is a need to institute a new regional system in Southeast Asia as pointed out by the Kuala Lumpur meeting. Based on these facts, new changes in Myanmar's foreign policy could be expected.

Everyone knows that the Yangon [Rangoon] government has always refused to join ASEAN in the past years and had given more preference for bilateral relations with ASEAN nations. Now, it could be seen that relations between ASEAN nations and the three Indochinese countries are less influenced by politics and that reason has become a basic foundation for wider economic cooperation in the Southeast Asian region. In this situation, it seems Myanmar cannot be a bystander to these new developments. That is the reason why the participation of Myanmar at the Kuala Lumpur meeting of Southeast Asia nations is remarkable.

The Yangon government responded very carefully to Malaysia's proposal by citing that it is rather early to discuss Myanmar's participation in the Southeast Asian economic group before receiving any definite proposals. At the same time, Myanmar's top diplomats speak in high esteem of the Japanese proposal for forming an economic cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region. It has been pointed out that the formation of this economic association could be supportive of Myanmar's national economy and should be agreed upon. However, we believe that in accordance with its economic interests Myanmar needs to partake in the regional cooperation of Southeast Asia.

Moscow, Manila Sign Twin Cities Accord

HK0403030491 Moscow in Tagalog to the Philippines 1300 GMT 3 Mar 91

[Text] The (?fifth) Congress of Twin Cities ended its sessions in Manila recently. Sixteen nations, including the Soviet Union, attended the congress which promoted twin city accords between various cities.

According to Anatoly (Polekov), the head of the Soviet delegation, the Soviet Union's policy of perestroyka is highly esteemed in the Philippines. As a result, many cities in the Philippines want to establish links with other Soviet cities.

At present, Manila and Moscow, as well as Baguio and (Kislovosk), are among the first to declare twin cities status.

Near East & South Asia

Akromeyev, Kryuchkov on Mideast Peace Process

LD0603220491 Moscow International Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Now that the military operations in the Gulf region are over, although a state of war still exists, people in many countries are thinking seriously and are drawing up projects for the postwar order in the region. Professional diplomats and politicians are not the only ones to be involved in this—scientists, military men, economists, and many others are also involved. Legislators, including those in the Soviet Union, are not standing aloof from these matters, either.

What is, for example, the opinion of the deputies of the Soviet legislature, those affiliated with the Army and with the security organs alike, about matters concerning the postwar order in the region? Our legislative correspondent Nikolay Gelikov decided to find out just that. His first interlocutor was President Gorbachev's military adviser, Marshal Sergey Akhromeyev. In reply to the correspondent's question on how he thinks the postwar order is going to be implemented in the region and how he views military cooperation between the Soviet Union and the states in the region, Marshal Akhromeyev said:

[Begin Akhromeyev recording, in Russian with superimposed translation into Arabic] It is not clear yet how the situation is going to be in Iraq and what direction the other countries in the region are going to take. The bulk of our cooperation there was with Iraq and Syria. Now the situation has changed—I mean the situation regarding Iraq. I cannot foresee anything concerning the direction these countries in the region—including Iraq—will be taking because this is not up to us and it is not the Soviet Union's business.

Regarding military cooperation, it is not possible to say anything definite, for example how, with whom, and the forms and volumes of this cooperation. But it is very clear to me that this cooperation must be established within the framework of the new thinking and on the basis of the principles of reasonable sufficiency. What is meant here is [to achieve] what is sufficient in order to guarantee the external security of the countries cooperating with us, and to take our country's interests into consideration. [end recording]

The second interlocutor was KGB Chairman Vladimir Kryuchkov. Gelikov asked him: How do you view the postwar settlement process in the Gulf?

[Begin Kryuchkov recording, in Russian with superimposed translation into Arabic] I believe it is in our interest that the settlement should be comprehensive and far-reaching. I also think the outcome of the settlement should not be detrimental to any state in the region. Kuwait must recover its sovereignty and Iraq must preserve its state. I think that the interest of the countries in the region should take precedence. It seems to me that this is extremely important and is the top priority. [end recording]

Our correspondent also asked: What can you say taking the settlement process from the angle of our interests and security?

[Begin Kryuchkov recording] I believe we also have interests in the Middle East. We cooperate on a fairly wide scale in the economic and other spheres with a number of countries in this region. I hope this cooperation will develop and our country will contribute positively in the overall process of the political settlement in this region and in the Middle East in general. [end recording]

Moscow To Intervene Over Missing French Reporters

AU0603132691 Paris AFP in English 1303 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Excerpt] Paris, March 6 (AFP)—The Soviet Union has agreed to "intervene with the Iraqi Government" in a bid to track down French journalists who disappeared in Iraq on Sunday and Monday, French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas said here Wednesday.

"The Soviet Embassy in Baghdad has been instructed to make every effort to track down the French journalists," Mr. Dumas told fellow ministers according to government spokesman Louis Le Pensec. Moscow represents French interests in Iraq since diplomatic ties were cut.

At least 25 journalists, including 15 French, disappeared while heading in various groups from Kuwait to Basra in southern Iraq, to investigate an uprising against the government of President Saddam Husayn.

French authorities had no "reliable information" on the whereabouts of the journalists, Minister-Delegate for Communications Catherine Tasca said Wednesday. "With the situation in the country, it's clear that they are in danger," she added.

Iraqi Ambassador to the United Nations 'Abd al-Amir al-Anbari on Tuesday said that military authority had been restored in Basra, which he hoped would make it possible to find foreigners and guarantee their safety in the next few days.

The French Foreign Ministry has also alerted the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the general staff of allied forces in the Gulf to the "disappearance" of the journalists, spokesman Daniel Bernard said Wednesday.

Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Belonogov was Wednesday in Tehran, as was Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Sa'dun Hammadi, Mr. Bernard said, noting that the issue could be raised in the Iranian capital. [passage omitted]

Commentator Says U.S. Waged 'Just War' in Gulf

PM0603224591 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 7 Mar 91 Union Edition p 5

[Commentary by Aleksandr Bovin under the "Political Observer's Opinion" rubric: "Strategy and Tactics"]

[Text] The Kuwait crisis is over. As expected, Iraq was defeated. The problems of the postwar settlement are now the priority. But the war itself, the course and lessons of the military actions, and the diplomatic stratagems which accompanied and to a large extent determined the development of the crisis will long be the subject of close attention. People will particularly study the causes, aims, and compatibility of Moscow's political actions, which, while supporting the general efforts of the UN Security Council up to and including the use of military force against Iraq, simultaneously sought to prevent military actions, which would have meant letting Iraq, the Iraqi Army, and the Iraqi leadership off unharmed. With certain reservations it is possible to speak of two lines, two facets, in our crisis policy. The first line, the first facet, expressed Moscow's strategy. The second dealt with tactics, although there were periods when there was a strong temptation to turn tactics into strategy.

The strategy was based on the fact that at the end of the 20th century the conditions have been created in which it is possible to begin forming a new world order by working with all states whose approach to international affairs is close to the principles of the new political thinking. The ground rules have long been known. They are enshrined in the UN Charter and other international legal acts. The "only" problem is to ensure that they are observed.

It has been written and said a thousand times that aggression is a crime, that it is criminal to use force or the threat of force to resolve disputes and clarify conflict situations. Now that the cold war is over, an opportunity has appeared to insist on this collectively through the UN mechanisms. Hence the resolute and unanimous reaction of the majority in the UN Security Council, including all its permanent members, to the Iraqi seizure of neighboring Kuwait.

Iraq was instructed to leave Kuwait and restore the status quo. Iraq refused. An economic blockade was declared against Iraq. Iraq was intransigent. Iraq was warned: Unless Kuwait is liberated before 15 January 1991, the UN Security Council will not oppose the use of military force to carry out its resolutions.

Within the framework of this strategy, the policies of Moscow and Washington coincided although they were not identical. The scale of the military machine which Washington began to deploy in Saudi Arabia and the quantity and quality of the armaments clearly showed that the United States intended to go beyond the limits of the UN mandate (to liberate Kuwait), rout Husayn's army and destroy Iraq's military infrastructure. As far as

I can judge, there are supporters of that approach in Moscow, at least among the journalists. As for the politicians, the appearance of a 500,000-strong U.S. army in the Near East, the prospect of military actions not far from the USSR border, and any uncertainty connected with a war on such a scale and intensity, did not generate enthusiasm in Moscow.

But squabbling with the Americans did not suit the Soviet Union's interests. Therefore it was decided—this is where tactics begin—to maneuver and step up operations on the flanks. The plan was a simple one: If Saddam Husayn could be persuaded to leave Kuwait, the United States would lose its pretext for beginning military actions. So the persuasion began. Our president talked with Tariq 'Aziz several times in Moscow. Academician Primakov made three flights to Baghdad.

The operation to rescue Iraq was meant to have one more political effect—to stress the autonomy and independence of the USSR's Near East policy and restore the Soviet Union's reputation in the Arab and Muslim world. The reaction of the tens of millions of Muslims living in our country was not a matter of indifference to Moscow, either.

Examining and tracing the interaction between the two lines in Gorbachev's crisis policy, you cannot fail to see that the switches of emphasis, the highlighting or, conversely, concealment of particular nuances and the tactical maneuvering which masked the invariability of the strategy depended to a considerable extent on the evolution of Soviet public opinion. That evolution was in one direction—the longer the Kuwait crisis dragged on and the longer the military actions continued, the more active and outspoken the critics of our policy's general strategic thrust became.

Let us examine their main arguments. **1. It was hard to qualify Iraq as the aggressor. First, it had never recognized Kuwait as an autonomous state. Second, Iraq's actions were an enforced measure of defense against the predatory activity of Anglo-American capital which had been conducting economic aggression against Iraq via Kuwait.**

Kuwait was a UN member, that is, it was recognized as an autonomous state by the entire world community, including the Arab and Muslim countries. No matter what Baghdad thought, the occupation and annexation of Kuwait were gross violations of international law and acts of aggression, pure and simple. It was somewhat embarrassing even to write about "Anglo-American capital." It exists, that goes without saying. But to blame it for Iraq's problems was the same as blaming Western banks for the collapse of Soviet finances. **2. War means suffering, bloodshed, and death. Even if Saddam Husayn was guilty, what had the Iraqi people done to deserve blame?**

From the moral viewpoint, the argument is irrefutable. Of course the people are not to blame, except perhaps for enduring tyrannical power for so long. But war must be judged not by moral laws but political laws. Let us think back. What had the German people done to deserve blame? Or the Japanese? Yet the allies razed dozens of their cities to the ground. It was only the deaths of hundreds of thousands of totally innocent people that paved the way to Nuremberg.

Thus, in my view, it is amoral to put forward the moral argument here. Even a just war is terrible, but that does not mean that it is necessary to forgive the aggressor or ignore aggression.

Yes, everything must be done to avoid war and that "everything" was done. For almost six months they tried to persuade and exhort Saddam Husayn. In reply he mocked those who exhorted him, and it wasn't just Kuwait on his conscience. His conscience bears the eight years of senseless war against Iran and the more than 1 million Iranians and Iraqis who died. He has on his conscience tens of thousands of victims of his tyrannical regime, including his "own" Kurds killed with poison gas.

Or perhaps he should be reminded of the "child's tears" or the "beauty" which will save the world? Appeals to humanity can be a means to enable evil to mock goodness. **3. The Soviet Union uncritically followed in the wake of U.S. policy by helping the United States protect its oil interests and assert its influence in the Near East.**

It sounds convincing, since both oil and influence are important to the United States. But let us test its merit. The Soviet Union was protecting its own interests, its chief interest—the creation of conditions in which aggression would be impossible, the creation of a stable, peaceful international situation. Unless we stop Saddam today, there will be new Husayns tomorrow and more blood will be shed. Therefore the war waged by the United States and the multinational force was our war, too.

By forming a united front with America we were objectively, whether we like it or not, supporting its interests and helping it grow strong in the region. But let us be realistic. Would we really have been better off if we had refused to back the UN Security Council decision, if we had condemned the United States and defended Iraq? In the end, every political choice has its pluses and minuses. The politican's job is to make the choice in which the pluses outnumber the minuses. That was the choice we made.

Certainly there will be talk now in America about a "Pax Americana," about the United States' being the only superpower left. But let us not lose our composure. Let them preen. Our security is guaranteed. First of all, we must deal with domestic affairs. Then even the Americans will be somewhat humbler... **4. We should not have stood alongside America and recognized it as one of Iraq's judges, given that it has on its conscience Vietnam, Grenada, and Panama and support for all manner of dictatorial, aggressive regimes.**

Indeed, America's record is not one of the best. But we have our blots too, so to speak. Czechoslovakia, for example, or Afghanistan. We too have consorted with dictators. States, like people, are not destined for all time merely to do evil or merely to do good. When assessing the current policy of the United States and the USSR we must consider past policy, but not see everything in its terms. In the new historical conditions, in this specific case, the United States acted in defense of a just cause and—terrible though it is to write it—waged a just war.

For curiosity's sake I will cite another argument. Since the population of the region is mainly Arab (that is, Semitic), the actions against the Iraqi people should be regarded as a "supreme manifestation of anti-Semitism." There is no point in arguing. For the doubters I will cite the source: SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA 26 February.

The arguments that are listed above were adduced not only in periodicals and television, but also in the legislature and other important forums. The government, on the one hand, continued the strategy of active participation in the anti-Iraq coalition and, on the other, stepped up, sometimes with elements of deliberate pressure, the display of contacts with Baghdad, trying again and again to persuade Saddam Husayn to show common sense and stop equivocating...

If Saddam Husayn had been more far-sighted, if he had not been trying to deceive us, piling reservation on top of reservation, the final phase of the bloodshed would perhaps have been avoided. This would have saved thousands of lives and, possibly, the present Baghdad regime. But Saddam Husyan overplayed his hand. He was determined not to see that the vast inertia of Washington's policy, strengthened by an expeditionary force of half a million, expenditure of many billions, and the support of the majority of Americans, would be stronger than a promise to leave Kuwait, accompanied by reservations more befitting victor than vanquished.

We might say that Gorbachev offered Husayn defeat without shame, while Bush offered defeat with shame. Husayn made his choice. An irrational choice, like much of what the former Baghdad dictator [as published] did.

Let us sum up. The tactics of persuasion did not bring the desired result. But they did not go unnoticed. "Although Gorbachev," THE NEW YORK TIMES writes in an editorial, "failed to achieve the end of the war by diplomatic means, he demonstrated that no new world order is possible without Moscow's participation. By going the final mile on the path to peace, he enhanced the Soviet Union's prestige in the Arab world."

Maybe I am mistaken, but I have the impression that Moscow's vigorous activity on the "final mile" accelerated Bush's decision to start the land battles. He feared that Moscow might persuade Husayn. It is not beyond the realm of possibility that some shrewd American might accuse the U.S. President of pandering to the interests of the USSR. George Bush helped the "Russians" do what they dared not do themselves, he might say—get rid of an unpredictable ally who did them discredit.

PRAVDA Views Baker's Middle East Mission

PM0703084391 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 7 Mar 91 Second Edition p 4

[Report by correspondent V. Gan: "The Leading Player? Washington Steps Up Military Presence in Near East"]

[Text] Washington—At the behest of U.S. President Bush, Secretary of State Baker is leaving 6 March for a tour that will take in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Syria, Israel, Turkey, and the Soviet Union. In Washington his mission is being characterized as an attempt to sound out questions connected with the military-political reshaping in the Near East after the defeat of Iraq.

Against the background of inflated excitement at the victory over Baghdad and the return to the instinctive arrogance and strength, Baker's tour is being viewed in some administration circles as aimed at reinforcing America's dominant role in the region's affairs. Even though President Bush himself denied that there is any intention to impose an "exclusively American answer" to Near East problems, it is no secret on the Potomac that what we are seeing is the elaboration of a "game plan" which would be just as effective as Operation Desert Storm. Speaking on television before his departure, Secretary Baker gave a clear hint that the United States intends to guarantee itself the status of the leading player.

It is reported that Baker is not taking any specific proposals with him regarding problems of regional peace and security—nothing but the ideas that he will discuss at forthcoming talks. The general thrust of those ideas is expressed quite definitely in the comments of administration officials.

First of all, Washington wants to considerably expand its military presence in the Persian Gulf region. Specifically there are plans for the storage of large consignments of U.S. weapons and hardware in Saudi Arabia, regular U.S. troop exercises there lasting many months, and the deployment of U.S. aircraft at bases in the Gulf. There is also a provision to deploy a U.S. carrier force there on what is effectively a permanent basis.

Clarifying the administration's views, Defense Secretary Cheney noted recently: "It is possible to create a sense of security and confidence among our friends and allies in the region by increasing the U.S. presence there." It is expected that the Secretary of State will discuss the possibility of the practical implementation of those schemes when in the Near Eastern capitals. Meanwhile, administration representatives are stressing that Washington is not seeking any official security structures like, for example, NATO. The agenda, they claim, includes "only" the intention "to improve" the U.S. capability to respond to crises.

On this, attention is drawn to the fact that the initial talk about the need to restrict the influx of weapons to the Near East has died down somewhat. It is reported that America's firm intention of seeking a strict embargo on military supplies applies only to Iraq, while the other countries of the region seem to have escaped America's field of vision. Observers attribute this metamorphosis partly to the fact that a curb on the Near East arms race would affect America's military relations with Israel, which, citing "hostile encirclement," is not disposed toward moves in this sphere. Meanwhile, specialists believe that without regional arms control reinforced by commitments from such traditional weapons suppliers as the United States, the USSR, France, China, and Brazil, there can be no talk of stability in the Near East.

It is not hard to see that ultimately all this hinges on the main problem in the region, the Arab-Israeli conflict, without whose solution true peace in the region is impossible. In the secretary of state's words, during the trip he will insist on a "dual approach." On the one hand, the organization of talks between the Arab states and Israel, on the other the search for ways to open dialogue between Tel Aviv and the Palestinians. Baker has said that despite "excellent relations" with Israel and the strengthening of U.S. ties with some Arab states, the United States cannot impose its solution of the conflict. Baker noted that he intends to elucidate the opinions of the Arabs and Israelis on the possibility of achieving a general peace agreement. "I have the feeling that there will be evidence of goodwill on both sides," the secretary of state said.

Feelings are one thing, but there have effectively been no indications of any new ideas. Israel continues to reject all proposals on convening an international conference on a peaceful political settlement in the Near East under the auspices of the UN Security Council. Washington in turn tends to favor the path of separate deals between Tel Aviv and its Arab neighbors along the lines of its Camp David accords with Egypt. According to current arguments on the Potomac, if the Arabs agreed to that Israel would probably show a greater readiness for concessions toward the Palestinians.

Even here there are grave doubts about such schemes. Shamir has only recently confirmed Israel's refusal to discuss the question of the return of the occupied Arab territories in exchange for peace. As for the Palestinian question, PLO Executive Committee Chairman 'Arafat's support for Saddam Husayn simply played into the hands of the Tel Aviv obstructionists.

It seems that after some hesitation, the administration has decided to adjust—in words at least—its approach to the Soviet Union's role in the Near East, from which it has long sought to crowd us out. On the eve of his departure from Washington, Baker said that the USSR and the United States stood "shoulder to shoulder" during the Gulf war. The Soviet Union, he stated, can play an "extremely important political role" by virtue of its "influence on many of the key players." Undoubtedly a positive assessment, but it remains to be seen what it means in practice.

On the whole, the United States is now taking the stage in the Near East holding powerful trump cards. Some people here even fear that Washington may be unduly self-confident. The belief is that the United States, having buried the "Vietnam syndrome" in the Arabian sands, has most likely acquired an "Iraq syndrome"—the conviction that American might is invincible. But the task of strengthening and maintaining peace in such an unstable and explosive region is far more difficult and demands great circumspection and responsibility.

Egyptian, GCC Plans for Regional Security Viewed

PM0603151191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 5 Mar 91 Union Edition p 4

[Report by correspondent D. Velikiy: "Egypt Puts Forward Plan"]

[Text] Cairo—President Husni Mubarak of Egypt has put forward a plan for a postwar arrangement of interstate relations in the region which, on the eve of the meeting in Damascus of the six members of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] plus Egypt and Syria, has all the hallmarks of being an Egyptian package of proposals to that forum.

In line with the Egyptian plan, it is proposed that relations between the Arab states of the region be based on: a rejection of vengeance, the restoration of relations of trust, and the creation of a system of true information about their political intentions toward each other. It is proposed that border disputes between Arab states be settled as soon as possible, and also that the democratic processes now under way in them be supported. An important part of the formula for a new arrangement in the Arab East is its transformation into a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, especially chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons. The plan presumes also a move toward the active settlement of the Palestinian question, which is tightly bound up with the problem of Arab-Israeli relations.

In his speech in the legislature the Egyptian president did not touch on one question that is of extreme importance in the region: What place is allocated to the West in the postwar arrangement, and is any such element as the presence of the troops of Western powers proposed in it? But Egypt's position on this is well known, and it envisages the creation of a system of collective security which would exclude the presence of foreign factors in it, but would rely exclusively on Arab forces. At the same time, Egypt proposes to play a leading role in the new security system.

But the GCC's stance is somewhat different. It is clear from the results of the meeting of these countries' foreign ministers which has just ended in Riyadh that Western participation in the postwar regional arrangement is not only not excluded by them, but would actually be welcomed based on the experience of the recent difficult months of war, when foreign troops proved to be the decisive military force in the conflict in the Persian Gulf.

TASS Assesses Middle East Peace Problems

LD0603182691 Moscow TASS in English 1757 GMT 6 Mar 91

[By TASS international news analyst Yuriy Tyssovskiy]

[Text] As the Gulf war recedes into the past, the world community increasingly often asks itself how the state of affairs in the Middle East should be reorganised so that this explosive region would get the long-cherished peace and tranquility.

A vast majority of countries regard a settlement of the Palestinian problem as the key element of a comprehensive solution to Middle Eastern problems. The Soviet Union, France, Britain, Germany, Canada and Japan, and Moslem world, the non-aligned countries and many other states in Europe, Asia and America favour this approach.

As far as Washington is concerned, it seems to me that it is aware of the timeliness of initiatives to undo the Middle East tangle, although it prefers hiding so far behind the well known formula: The United States may not and does not want to impose peaceful solutions on anyone. This in the opinion of U.S. Secretary of State James Baker would be "counterproductive".

However, Baker also spoke recently about the need to reconcile Arab states and Israel and create conditions for the start of a dialogue between Israel and the Palestinians. So, with guarded optimism, one can hope that some changes can take place in the region soon.

And what about Tel Aviv? Shim'on Peres, leader of the opposition labour party, told the Paris-based newspaper TRIBUNE DE L'EXPANCION today that he considers it necessary to "make provision for the idea of handing back the occupied territories provided a demilitarised zone between Jordan and Israel is created."

This can already be viewed as a step in the right direction. But Israel's ruling bloc Likud does not want even to hear anything about exchanging territories for peace. Israeli Foreign Minister David Levi submitted Israel's peace plan to British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd. The peace plan is based on the need to conclude arms control agreements between the countries of the region, to hold talks with Arab states and negotiate with "Palestinians".

Which "Palestinians"? Only Mr. Levi knows this. But it is quite clear that, on Tel Aviv's insistence, the Palestine Liberation Organisation will be excluded from the process, which was repeatedly spoken of by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir.

This approach is as hopeless as the previous attempts to settle the crisis at earlier stages of its development.

It must be added that the Israeli leadership opposes the very idea of convening an international Middle East peace conference with the participation of all the sides concerned.

The Israeli leadership ought to learn one major lesson from the war in the desert. At a time when the country's cities turned out to be vulnerable to Iraqi missiles, the multinational forces did everything to avert danger from Israel.

If the chance to establish a just peace in the Middle East is lost, and if bitterness and despair remain the lot of the Arabs and Palestinians, what happened is then likely to recur sooner or later, only with far more terrible consequences.

The efforts of many countries are now aimed at precluding such an undesirable scenario. Success of the efforts apparently depends in many respects on the reasonableness of Israeli leaders.

Kuwaiti Envoy Thanks USSR for Gulf Policy

PM0603164391 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 6 Mar 91 p 3

[Interview with 'Abd-al-Muhsen al-Du'ayj, Kuwaiti ambassador to the USSR, by S. Zavorotnyy and I. Chernyak; place and date not given: "The Amir Retains Composure"]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] [KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] Do you intend to demand compensation from Iraq for the damage?

[Al-Du'ayj] The Iraqi leadership is already complaining that they do not have the funds and have been ruined. But we do not lay claim to the people's money. Saddam Husayn, his wife and relatives, and members of Iraq's Revolutionary Command Council have only to take their money out of accounts in Switzerland—and the problem will be solved. With the support of the world community the Iraqi people, in my view, can make their leaders fork out for the crimes. Remember: This was the case with Philippine dictator Marcos, and this, to all appearances, will be the case with General Noriega.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] Reports of discrimination against nonindigenous inhabitants and of the inequality which existed in Kuwait before the war have appeared in the world press. On the other hand, it is also known that at the end of the eighties the amir's government took the first steps toward democratization—a parliament was elected, an opposition emerged... What, in your view, will the internal consequences of the war be for Kuwait?

[Al-Du'ayj] Undoubtedly, there are no ideal states in the world. At the same time our political system has proved its viability. Even during the occupation, not a single Kuwaiti was found who wished to become a member of Saddam Husayn's puppet government. The Iraqi president's idea of finding collaborators dissatisfied with the amir's policies burst like a soap bubble. According to our data, there are no Kuwaitis who wish to remain abroad.

[KOMOSMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] To judge from Western press reports, the Saudi Government today advocates keeping U.S. troops on the holy soil of Mecca and Medina—something that the United States has sought for several decades. But does the presence of "infidels" who profess a different religion and are not squeamish about eating pork not offend the Arabs' national and religious feelings? Do you like to have as "guests" GI's who include quite a few lovers of whisky?

[Al-Du'ayj] I will start with whisky. You will agree it is ridiculous to take offense at liberators because they sometimes allow themselves a little weakness. I believe the troops who will remain are tactful enough to respect our traditions. They can always drink a bottle or two in a bar on board ship—that is their soil. As for the allies' subunits being in the Persian Gulf zone—we are against keeping massive contingents of foreign troops there. It is a question of denoting their presence with small military contingents. This is being done because the threat to peace in the Arab East persists as long as Saddam Husayn remains in power. We cannot defend ourselves. And then, very important marine lines of communication are located in this region, by which oil is sent to developed countries. Both the "black gold" itself and its means of transportation need defending. We will also be pleased with an increase in the Soviet military presence in the region. At present, as far as I know, there are just two of your warships in the Persian Gulf.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] May we pass this invitation to the USSR minister of defense?

[Al-Du'ayj] Undoubtedly.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] The war in the gulf is over. But, to judge from speeches by your leadership, Kuwait advocates the continuation of economic sanctions against Iraq...

[Al-Du'ayj] The war is over. But it has not provided the answers to many questions. For example, what is to happen to Saddam Husayn? Are he and the entire Iraqi leadership to be put on trial as war criminals? But to whom are they to be handed—to an international court, the United States, Saudi Arabia, ourselves? Another question: Does Iraq still have stocks of chemical and bacteriological weapons, and, if so, how are they to be destroyed? And what is to be done with the Scuds which Baghdad still has? In our view, the continuation of the economic blockade will help to find answers to these questions.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] Are you not afraid that after the war other countries will try to take the place of a weakened Kuwait, which was an economic center of the Persian Gulf, a center of trade and ports?

[Al-Du'ayj] I think not. Prior to the war we complemented one another, rather than competing. I hope that this will continue to be the case. And then, we have nothing to share, for the whole world is the market for the gulf countries. This is the capitalist system: Whoever does his thing better is the winner.

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] For a long time a veil of secrecy was drawn over the Kuwaiti resistance movement, which was being assisted by Saudi intelligence and the CIA. Today can you, at last, speak about your partisans?

[Al-Du'ayj] Fighters of the Kuwaiti resistance movement played a great role in bringing our victory nearer. There were several instances of self-sacrifice on the part of young Kuwaitis. Thus, one of them drove a vehicle crammed with explosives into an Iraqi truck transporting soldiers. But the troops of occupation unleashed terror against the peaceful population. It was necessary to change tactics and make strikes against military targets in sparsely populated, desert centers. But this did not mean the abandonment of the struggle. The Kuwaitis were able to create a clandestine network in the city with secret prisons, where more than 700 captured Iraqi soldiers and officers were held. They were interrogated, and information was passed to the Americans over satellite communications. The movement's members have compiled lists of war criminals...

[KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA] We have heard of the total failure of the USSR's policy in the Near East during the Gulf crisis. What is your viewpoint?

[Al-Du'ayj] In our view, the Soviet Union's policy was correct. M.S. Gorbachev's initiatives accelerated the attainment of peace and the ending of the bloodshed and made it possible to avoid still greater destruction. As is known, Kuwait granted the USSR credits worth $1 billion. So, we are ready to give 10 times more—the new thinking is worth this. Once again, thank you for the assistance and support.

Radio Peace and Progess Views U.S. Aims in Gulf

LD0703002191 Moscow Radio Peace and Progress in Arabic 1400 GMT 5 Mar 91

[Commentary by Ahmad Abu-Rashid from the "The USSR Through the Eyes of an Arab" program]

[Excerpts] Since the Gulf crisis erupted last August in the wake of Iraq's occupation of Kuwait, the Arab region has been passing through a crucial stage, due to the American-multinational concentrations which came from beyond the seas and oceans in order to impose their domination and hegemony over Arab recources.

Oil became a principal source of motivation in the conflict. As is known, the oil factor plays a major role in determing policies and geopolitics. Furthermore, it has a major and important effect on certain aspects of people's daily lives.

In my opinion, oil has been one of the most prominent and important factors dominating the political geography of the Arab Gulf region. It had played an important role in the delineation of the borders of the Gulf region countries, the types of political regimes ruling them, and the relationship between these regimes and other regimes. [passage omitted]

In my opinion, the Gulf war is first and essentially a war by the West and the United States, and behind them Israel, against a strong, quallelsome Third World country, against an Arab country which had revived old slogans such as Arab unity, Arab oil for the Arabs, and, more important, the liberation of Palestine, as well as other such slogans that the Arab citizens had almost forgotten because of the hard times the citizens were going through.

One has to pause here to consider a somewhat bewildering matter: How did the United States, led by the arrogant American President Bush, succeed in massing such a large and varied number of countries behind its direct objectives in the Arab region?

Though the enthusiasm of the coalition allies to go as far as waging war varied between one country and another, logic and reality indicate that these countries only went along with the objectives of the United States where they too had objectives of their own lying within the framework of their military interests. [passage omitted]

It was evident from the early hours of the filthy war that its aim was not the liberation of Kuwait. [Passage indistinct] it is evident that the destruction of Arab Islamic civilization is, as is known, the objective of world Zionism in the first place and that of the United States and the West in the second place.

This explains why the United States has obstructed all Arab and international peaceful solutions. It became certain day by day that the United States does not want the Arabs to achieve a political solution in their own particular way, which would safeguard their interests and save the Arab region from the dangers of continued foreign intervention in its internal affairs.

As soon as the signs indicated the possible tipping of the scales in favour of a political solution, the U.S. Administration hastened to waylay it and to intensify its aggressive and bellicose language. This, unfortunately, was what happened.

Before the start of the recent war waged by the United States and its coalition allies on the orders, not of the United Nations, but of the reckless and arrogant Bush, voices rose inside and outside the United States saying that the sanctions imposed on the strong Arab country of Iraq have been choking it and hence the sanctions should be given more time to bite before the choice is made for war. According to American sources, Iraq's exports dropped by 97 percent and its imports by 90 percent.

Despite the fact that many members of the American Congress agreed with this view, Bush succeeded in securing an overwhelming majority of votes at the American Congress in support of the war option. So did the racist Major, in spite of the stands of the British Labour Party, which did not favor war. Mitterrand did the same in the face of considerable opposition.

What has this Arab country done to be faced with this frightful massing of forces, representing all the world's mightiest military capabilities?

True, Iraq emerged as a power that scared the West after the Iran-Iraq war ended last year. This itself was created by these same powers in order to strike at Iranian power with an Iraqi hand, and to destroy both the Iraqi and Iranian powers for the good of the Israeli power in the region.

As soon as the Iraq-Iran war ended, voices began to be raised in the West calling for the containment and fettering of Iraqi might, so that an end might be put to it. Though the Iraq-Iran war was futile and a waste of Iranian, Arab, and Islamic capabilities, it did lead to the creation of an Arab army versed in the arts of combat and war and possessing a terrible arsenal—an arsenal that began to threaten the West by threatening the oil, which is one of the sources of the prosperity of the West and its peoples. I will not be exaggerating if I say that the standard of living of American and Western citizens is achieved at the expense of the prosperity of the Arab citizens.

The United States does not like to see any Arab country become strong in the region because it will pose a threat to the new world order which the United States is formulating. If that Arab country were to annex Kuwait, therefore, it would get stronger and threaten to become a world power that could use its power to realize the Arab nationalist slogans and the revival of those who have been destroyed.

All of the signs are that the decisions to fight and destroy Arab Iraq were taken prior to the start of the Gulf crisis on 2 August. The categorical and evident proof of this can be seen in the fact that, throughout the crisis, the U.S. Administration asked Iraq to choose between two solutions only: surrender or war. [passage omitted]

In my opinion, Iraq emerged victorious from the confrontation that took place on the ground recently because it did not submit to the American conditions. Indeed, the United States has to date not achieved the true objectives for which it came; namely, the imposition of hegemony on the Arab region and the establishment of a pro-U.S. regime in Iraq.

I wonder whether the West has thought about the horizons that have begun to appear publicly now. We would be exaggerating if we were to put all the Western powers in one basket. Some of the European countries, such as Italy and Spain, provided token forces only for the battle. They are unlikely to increase their involvement, if in fact they do not withdraw under the pressure of their masses or the crazy development of the war day by day.

Among the European forces allied against Iraq, the British position stands out because it is one of the most rigorous. Since the start of the crisis, the British position was identical to the American one and indeed exceeded it in extremism and the beating of the drums of war in some cases. [passage omitted]

I believe it must be made clear in this regard that the objectives of the American war have not changed. They go beyond the question of the liberation of Kuwait and even beyond the future of Iraq's internal and military positions. They are: the crushing of any resistance to American hegemony on the oil areas; American control of oil prices and distribution; and the imposition of the new world role of the United States as the principal and sole policeman of the region, which is being described as the new international order.

In my opinion, the current conflict is not a conflict for the defense of a small country that has been the victim of aggression, nor is it for the protection of democracy and the defense of human rights, as they claim. This is because these rights do not exist at all in the region in the American concept of it. It is also not a new attempt to impose a new formula in international relations.

It is, in the first place, a conflict for the protection of the American interests. Many aggressions and transgressions have taken place in the past in many parts of the world. Some of these, such as the Israeli aggression, were direct and flagrant. Yet neither the United States nor the international community did anything to prevent aggression or draw attention to it.

In the final analysis, in my opinion, the blow struck at Iraq and the destruction of its military capability and economic infrastructure constitute a blow struck against the Arab forces and a big insult to the Arabs and Muslims. It is an addition to the power of the Zionist enemy which is lying in wait over the Arab land.

The recent Israeli statements and calls for striking at Iraq, continuing the war against it inside Iraqi territories, and striking at what remained of the Iraqi military and economic capabilities provide crystal-clear proof which testifies to and affirms this.

Further Reportage on Belonogov's Visit to Tehran

Meets Iranian Foreign Minister

LD0703094991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0759 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] Tehran, 7 March (TASS)—A.A. Velayati, foreign minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, on Wednesday received A.M. Belonogov, deputy USSR foreign minister, who is here on a visit. During the meeting, IRNA notes, there was a discussion on questions concerning the situation in Iraq and the present situation in the Persian Gulf region. The sides expressed concern at the events in Iran's neighboring country. At the same time, the Iranian minister stressed that none of the countries had the right to interfere in Iraq's internal affairs, nor did Iran intend to. The Iranian minister spoke of the importance of preserving Iraq's territorial integrity and of the importance of the withdrawal of all foreign forces from the region.

In the course of the conversation, it was stressed that both Iran and the Soviet Union had done everything possible to convince the Iraqi leadership of the need to withdraw from Kuwait and end the war.

On the same day, the Soviet envoy had talks with M. Va'ezi, deputy foreign minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

'Unanimous' Views on Security

LD0703123491 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1142 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] Tehran, 7 March (TASS)—USSR Deputy Foreign Minister A.M. Belonogov was in Tehran at the invitation of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran on 6 and 7 March. He had meetings and consultations with Iranian Foreign Minister A.A. Velayati and his deputy, M. Va'ezi.

An exchange of views on various aspects of the qualitatively new situation that emerged in the Persian Gulf area after hostilities ended was at the center of attention. These issues were examined in the light of the need to make the cease-fire permanent and start looking for ways to ensure a stable peace in the region.

The Soviet and Iranian representatives were unanimous in their belief that a structure of reliable security should be established as soon as possible. This system should be based, primarily, on the will and interests of the peoples of the countries in the region and should stipulate the inviolability of state borders and the territorial integrity of all those states. Such a system would answer the tasks of consolidating peace and ensuring stability in the Persian Gulf region.

Having noted with satisfaction the key role of the United Nations and its Security Council in restoring Kuwait's sovereignty and independence, both sides spoke in favor of the Security Council continuing to deal vigorously with regional issues. It was also noted that in the current transition to peace the United Nations should make its important contribution to the cause of creating a system of regional security.

The sides highly appreciated the level of political cooperation attained between the USSR and Iran and voiced satisfaction with the development of bilateral links in trade, economic, cultural and other areas.

Andreyev Comments on Talks

NC0703135291 Moscow in Persian to Iran 1500 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Commentary by Yuriy Andreyev]

[Text] Talks between Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Belonogov and Iranian leaders are taking place in Tehran today. In his remarks at Mehrabad Airport, Aleksandr Belonogov stated: I have come to Iran in a good mood because the exchanges of views with friends continues and are (?always) extremely fruitful and sincere. Our commentator Yuriy Andreyev writes:

These remarks are not merely diplomatic etiquette. During the past months sincere talks between the Soviet Union and Iran have become ordinary, and it is clear to everyone that the consultations between Moscow and Tehran continue regularly. Moreover, as the Kuwaiti crisis showed, such consultations are turning into an important element for the stabilization of the Near East.

The current talks are no exception. Reports indicate that Aleskandr Belonogov's talks in Tehran are primarily aimed at the issue of post-war security in the Persian Gulf. The Soviet Union and Iran are interested in a reliable security system in this region—a system that will prevent the repetition of such recent tragic incidents. In relation to this, the issue of regional stability is directly linked to the interests of the Soviet Union and Iran because the recent conflagration was close to their borders.

Our commentator then writes: Even during the war operations in the Persian Gulf, the joint diplomatic efforts by the Soviet Union and Iran revealed the noteworthy closeness in the two countries' stances, and apparently these two countries are on the same side now. Both countries primarily support a judicious approach to solving problems about the fate of the Persian Gulf in the post-war era by realistically taking into consideration all the realities. Moscow and Tehran agree, first and foremost, that security in the Persian Gulf should be ensured on a regional level.

During his meeting with British Prime Minister John Major yesterday, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev especially pointed out that the security system that should be formed in the Near East should primarily meet the interests of the regional countries. (?However), this approach does not rule out the participation of the United Nations in solving post-war problems. In relation to this, I should cite Aleksandr Belonogov, who said: I want to discuss with the Iranian side the outlook of the international community's participation in the creation of a regional security system.

Well, dear listeners, (?the views of) Moscow and Tehran are (?closer) now than ever before. Both countries understand the need to preserve Iraq's territorial integrity and the need for the withdrawal of foreign forces from the region, as well as the need for [word indistinct] talks with the participation of all the belligerent sides. A search for a return to peace and calm in the Persian Gulf region: This is the major slogan of Aleksandr Belonogov's discussions in Tehran.

East Europe

RSFSR's Kozyrev Receives Czech Prime Minister

LD0603200291 Moscow TASS in English 1927 GMT 6 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondents Sergey Ryabikin and Leonid Timofeyev]

[Text] Moscow March 6 TASS—"In order to maintain good relations between us, we must lean on Russo-Czech links", head of the Czech government Peter Pithart said during his conversation here with Russia's foreign minister Andrey Kozyrev.

The Czech government leader arrived in Moscow today on an official visit at the invitation of the Council of Ministers of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic.

Stressing that his is the first visit by the chairman of the Czech government to the RSFSR, Pithart expressed hope for further fruitful development of bilateral contacts between the Czech Republic and Russia at a variety of levels.

Participants in the conversation agreed that "a Europe of regions" and the expansion of economic, cultural and other links between subject of federations in Europe have favorable prospects.

In his address to the foreign guest Andrey Kozyrev stressed that both Czechia [as received] and Russia are now tackling similar problems, connected with overcoming vestiges of their totalitarian regimes.

Kozyrev described Russia's foreign policy as "constructive parallelism" meaning the development of links between the Russian republic and other countries that facilitate the foreign political and economic activity of the Soviet Union as a whole.

He told the Czech guest that the draft union treaty, being finalized these days, views all constituent republics of the union as full equals in their participation in international relations and subjects of international law.

Andrei Kozyrev touched upon the Persian Gulf problem. Setting out Russia's stance on the issue, the minister noted that it is necessary to draw conclusions from the supplies of weapons to some countries in the region. The Russian minister caused the choice of Saddam Husayn as the Soviet ally in the region "an unhappy one". According to Kozyrev, economic and cultural and not ideological concerns should prevail in deciding on the choice of partners.

CSFR 'Extreme Reactionary' Right Forces Viewed

91UF0531A Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 2 Mar 91 First Edition p 6

[Correspondent A. Krushinskiy report: "The Worse, the Better?"]

[Text] Prague—The week just ending passed in Czechoslovakia beneath the sign of the increased assertiveness of extreme-right groups. Two anticommunist mass meetings were held one after the other on 25 February (the anniversary of the 1948 events that brought the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia to power) in Wenceslas and Stare Mesto squares in Prague. A "seminar on the crimes of communism" had been held the day before in the Waldstein Palace.

Calls were heard at the meetings for the "de-Bolshevization of society," that is, for the expulsion from the parliament and government of all who were ever members of the Communist Party. Demands for a ban on the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and the conferment on the persons persecuted in the years of socialist building of the statute [as published] of activists of the "Third Resistance" (after the struggle for independence in 1918 and against fascism in 1939-1945) were heard.

None of this means, of course, that it is already "frightening to go out into the street" in Prague. The more so in that less than 5,000 participants were, per the boldest estimates, mustered at both meetings together (although they had been publicized in advance in the press). It is hard to say, what is more, of whom there were more there—people attending the mass meeting or incidental gapers, of whom there is always a surplus in such busy parts of the capital.

In a word, we have to agree with the opinion of a number of Prague papers, which evaluated these actions as unsuccessful. However, an underestimation of the possibilities of extreme reactionary forces is hardly right either. After all, although the sponsors of the anticommunist meetings and seminars were extremist parties and groupings whose political authority in Czechoslovakia is as yet negligible, these activities were dignified by the presence of dignitaries. Thus the seminar in the Waldstein Palace was addressed by Jan Ruml, first deputy federal minister of the interior. In his speech he promised those at the meeting the assistance of his staff in "shedding light on dark aspects of Czechoslovak history." Among the speakers in Wenceslas Square were prominent leaders of the disbanded Civic Forum. What was this—attempts to win the affections of the extreme right or to divert people's attention from the material difficulties they are experiencing?

One further event, which also occurred in the final days of February, testifies to the danger of such calculations: the first congress of the extreme-right Republican Party. Its leader, M. Sladek, urges, specifically, the "return" to Czechoslovakia of the Transcarpathian Ukraine!

Sladek proclaimed among the immediate goals early parliamentary elections, at which he hopes to obtain no less than 10-15 percent of the vote with the subsequent acquisition of the offices of defense minister and interior minister. "Half a million people could still be without jobs in Czechoslovakia by May," he proclaimed, "and we are counting on people's dissatisfaction helping us realize our program."

"The worse, the better," in other words. What could be more dangerous than such a principle? The February anticommunist meetings were manifestly unsuccessful, but those wishing to "rock the boat" are not disheartened.

West Europe

Legislators Meet With WEU Assembly Members

LD2802231491 Moscow TASS in English 2134 GMT 28 Feb 91

[By correspondent Igor Kuleshov]

[Text] Paris February 28 TASS—Aspects of cooperation between the Soviet Union and the West European Union (WEU) were discussed during the meeting between Soviet parliamentarians and representatives of this military alliance of Western countries in Paris on Thursday.

The Soviet delegation led by deputy chairman of the Soviet parliament Aleksandr Mokanu held a series of meetings with WEU Assembly members and representatives of its various committees.

During the meetings, the sides discussed problems of disarmament, the creation on the European continent of a system of mutual trust and cooperation and the further development of the CSCE process.

The burden of armaments weighs down on the Soviet economy with incredible force, the head of the Soviet delegation told TASS. This is why our talks with WEU representatives focused on disarmament problems, defence sufficiency and the conversion of military production.

Great interest was evoked by our proposal to develop by concerted efforts and launch with the help of a Soviet booster-rocket an artificial earth satellite to monitor ecological processes in the Gulf, the Aral Sea and other regions of the globe.

Contacts with WEU representatives, first established in 1987, grow more productive from year to year, Aleksandr Mokanu stressed.

As regards WEU, WEU Assembly Chairman Robert Pontillon said, we proposed creating a satellite to control disarmament processes. He said that the West European and Soviet representatives considered the possibility of setting up working groups to discuss problems of mutual interest.

The sides also discussed the development of mutual trade and prospects for cancelling limits imposed by the Export Control Committee (COCOM) on exports to the Soviet Union of Western technologies.

FRG Expresses 'Great Satisfaction' Over Treaty

PM0603160591 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 6 Mar 91 Second Edition p 5

[Report by correspondent Ye. Grigoryev: "Satisfaction on the Rhine at Ratification of FRG-USSR Accords"]

[Text] Bonn, 5 Mar—FRG political circles reacted with great satisfaction to the news of the USSR Supreme Soviet's ratification of the Treaty on a Final Settlement With Respect to Germany (two plus four), along with the Treaty on Good-Neighborliness, Partnership, and Cooperation between our countries and other documents relating to it.

In his statement on television Federal Chancellor H. Kohl described the Supreme Soviet's decision as a "crucial day for Soviet-German relations" justifying the expectations for good-neighborliness and partnership between the German and Soviet peoples. W. Boetsch, leader of the Christian Social Union group in the Bundestag, described the ratification as the "end of the chapter of postwar history." In turn H.-J. Vogel, chairman of the Social Democratic Party, welcoming the parliamentary act in Moscow, stressed that it confirms that the USSR president is true to his word.

It must be said that people here awaited the treaties' passage through the Soviet parliament with some concern. This concern was to a considerable extent generated by the criticism of some elements of the package of agreements voiced in speeches by a number of the Supreme Soviet's military members. What is more, people here have still not gotten accustomed to the fact that our parliament discusses documents submitted for ratification in a comprehensive and in-depth manner, which, naturally, takes time. The German press has even voiced the fear that Moscow would exploit the ratification process to put "pressure on Bonn" with a view to extorting additional financial conditions. However, people on the Rhine can now see for themselves once again that the Soviet Union favors a new beginning and good relations and comprehensive partnership with the united Germany.

"Moscow approves the treaty on German sovereignty," "Supreme Soviet ratifies treaties and agreements with Germany"—newspapers say today. "The dispute over the German treaties was also a dispute about perestroyka and the new thinking which—and this has now become fact—the deputies' decision has once again confirmed," SUEDDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG believes.

The press today also points out that the Soviet legislature has approved in principle—but not yet ratified—the agreement on the temporary sojourn and withdrawal of Soviet troops from German territory. This is taken calmly. People here realize that there are a whole series of questions that may arise in the course of partnership and in the course of implementing the treaties and agreements that have been concluded. Some newspapers note that such questions include among others, for instance, the question of compensation to Soviet citizens who were driven away to Germany to perform forced labor during the war.

Although the bulk of the German press devotes great attention to the ratification of the Soviet-German treaties and agreements, a number of prominent newspapers are not embarrassed to continue their campaign, effectively supporting the endeavors made by well-known circles in a number of Soviet republics to break down the central authority and break up the Soviet Union. This campaign, which has reached such a scale that one is bound to mention it, clearly contravenes the elementary notion of how relations between good neighbors and partners should be structured.

FRG Groups Invited To Discuss Troop Withdrawal

LD0603223491 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 6 Mar 91

[From the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] All FRG media are widely commenting on the USSR Supreme Soviet's ratification of the package of treaties with united Germany. Our correspondent reports from Berlin on the first practical steps to implement them.

[Begin recording] [Correspondent V. Mostovoy] Such a meeting of representatives of the five eastern laender of the FRG, federal ministries, and the Bundeswehr with the command of the Western Group of Forces—at the initiative of the Soviet side, moreover—was taking place for the first time. The German representatives spent nearly a whole day on the territory of one of the military units of the Western Group of Forces, with, as they stressed, great benefit to themselves. After all, it is necessary to jointly resolve the enormous number of problems that neither side had encountered in the past. How, for example, should cases of desertion be handled from the legal standpoint, or the aggressive attitude of Germans toward our citizens? Or how is the handover of the vast quantity of movable and immovable property to be effected on a mutually beneficial basis? After all, over the years the Soviet Army in the former GDR built 21,000 assorted facilities at a cost of over 10 billion marks.

A strange surprise awaited the representatives of the local authorities and businessmen. The market economy has also left its mark on the Western Group of Forces. All the goods, equipment, and material that may be sold for hard currency here, in the FRG, were exhibited in the Berlin brigade instead of being removed to the Soviet Union.

It was clear from the start that among local entrepreneurs there is interest, considerable interest, in the army property being offered. Our servicemen are also acquitting themselves well in business, a field that is new to them, admittedly with support from the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations.

The day concluded with a big news conference in the Berlin House of Officers, which perhaps for the first time contained such a number of Western reporters. Among the hundreds of questions put to Colonel General Burlakov, commander in chief of the Western Group of Forces, the main one concerned whether we would be able to withdraw the troops from the FRG before the end of 1994.

[Burlakov] I think we do not as yet have any problems that would hinder our withdrawal. [end recording]

Mitterrand Calls for Middle East Peace Talks

PM0503164991 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 5 Mar 91 Union Edition p 4

[Report by correspondent Yu. Kovalenko: "F. Mitterrand: 'Return to Peace Under UN Auspices'"]

[Text] Paris—The French president has called for a summit meeting of UN Security Council member states to resolve the Near East problems.

President Francois Mitterrand of France has proposed that a meeting of the UN Security Council be called at the level of heads of states and governments—the first such meeting ever. It is, the president stressed in a TV message to the French people, the United Nations which adopted the decision to use military force against Iraq and it must organize the return to peace.

France, Francois Mitterrand recalled after confirming Paris' desire to play an active role in the postwar settlement of the conflict, advocates the holding of one or several international conferences under UN auspices to seek ways to ensure the foundations of a firm and lasting peace in the Near East. Several factors must be taken into account here. Israel, the president pointed out, must have reliable and generally recognized borders and also the means to safeguard its security. The Palestinians, being a people, must have a homeland and a state of their own. Lebanon must have the right to sovereignty. In addition, the French president noted, within the framework of the settlement it is necessary to resolve questions connected with the right of the ethnic minorities in the Near East, environmental protection, the fair distribution of natural resources, and arms control.

After broaching the question of the presence of French troops in Iraq and Kuwait, Mitterrand said that they will stay there until the problems connected with the ceasefire are definitively resolved. Some subunits will return home in April, others in May, but all the French units will leave the region before fall.

As for the lessons of the war, Mitterrand noted the need for arms modernization in the light of scientific and technological development and also for a discussion in parliament of army-related questions. The head of state went on to say that the need for this modernization, however, does not mean that there will be changes in France's strategy. The nuclear deterrent forces are still and will remain the linchpin of that strategy, the president stressed.

TASS on EC Decision To Grant USSR Food Aid

LD0503155691 Moscow TASS in English 1514 GMT 5 Mar 91

[By correspondent Valeriy Shashkov]

[Text] Brussels March 5 TASS—Final consultations, held here today between the European Council and the European Parliament, settled details on granting food aid by the EC to the Soviet Union.

These consultations completed the technical procedure started in compliance with a decision made by the EC heads of state and government last December.

Local analysts regard the green light as confirmation of improving relations between the EC and the Soviet Union, which deteriorated as a result of increased tension in the Baltics early this year.

The Soviet Union will receive urgent food aid, worth 250 million European Currency Units (ECU), the first consignments of which the USSR will receive late in March or early in April.

In addition, the EC countries will give guarantees to Western banks to extend credits to the USSR, worth 500 million ECUs, to purchase foodstuffs.

The European Council also instructed the EC Commission to resume preparations for granting 400 million ECUs to the Soviet Union as technical aid to carry out the reform of economic structures.

Belgian Foreign Minister Mark Eyskens, who participated in the European Council session, said that the EC countries link this aid with the policy of reforms in the USSR and the state of relations between the centre and the Baltic republics.

Correction to Commander on Withdrawal Process

LD0603233191

Moscow TASS International Service at 1553 GMT on 6 March supplies the following correction to the item headlined "Western Group Commander on Withdrawal Process," published in the 6 March Soviet Union DAILY REPORT, page 22:

Column two, first partial paragraph, sentence four, make read: ...40 military cantonments on the territory of which there are buildings constructed by the Soviet side costing 800 million marks. But unfortunately we are receiving no compensation for them; there are no buyers yet. In order to... (rewording)

Supreme Soviet

USSR Supreme Soviet's 5 Mar Proceedings

LD0503224191

[Editorial Report] Moscow Central Television Second Program Network in Russian at 1848 GMT on 5 March broadcasts a 62-minute recorded "At the USSR Supreme Soviet" program on USSR Supreme Soviet proceedings in the Kremlin in Moscow on 5 March. The announcer reports that the Supreme Soviet today passed the draft law on state security bodies in its first reading, after which KGB Chairman Vladimir Kryuchkov addresses the Supreme Soviet.

At 1909 GMT Deputy Sharin, chairman of the Committee for Defense and Security, delivers a co-report on behalf of the committee, detailing its recommendations. Ideally, he says, there would be a basic "concept" of security and the security organs—but time is pressing, he says, and in practice the drawing up of the law must proceed rapidly. The recommendations of Deputy Ryzhkov and his group have been incorporated in the draft, says Sharin.

The announcer reports that some deputies considered that there had been insufficient discussion of the draft, while other disagreed, saying that there had been plenty discussion already. Nevertheless, a discussion on the issue ensued, says the announcer.

Deputy Sokolov, from Kuybyshev, says that the security services are coming in for much criticism today—for example for being too late in connection with the Fergana incident. He says that much criticism could be warded off if the security services belonged clearly to the state, rather than to the CPSU. The security services must be given a legal basis on which to operate, he says.

An unidentified female deputy details past examples of repression at the hands of the security services. Nowadays, the danger of international terrorism must be combatted, she says. People's deputies must be protected in today's circumstances, she says, as she and others have already received threatening phone calls.

At 1923 GMT Deputy Uvalov speaks in favor of passing the draft law, saying that it will further the law-making process within the country. There are, however, shortcomings, she says: There are inadequate means of monitoring enforcement and a lack of social provision to maintain officers' families.

Deputy Nemtsev says that the version of the law currently being considered has already been through ten drafts, and now has 32 people working on it. He goes on to enumerate the issues considered by the drafting commission in the course of its work. He asks that the commission be allowed to conclude its work in peace, and to produce a law that is adequate in today's circumstances.

Deputy Samarin says that the future lies with a renewed union. There is also nowadays a de facto multiparty situation, he notes.

Deputy Krayko says that society has emerged from the totalitarian past. The so-called democratic groups are suffering greater Bolshevism than the CPSU, he says—they need to be cured from the diseases of the past.

Most deputies are in favor of passing the law. Kryuchkov mounts the rostrum again to answer questions.

At 1939 GMT Kryuchkov answers a written question from Sobchak. Another questions concerns the border troops' members of the KGB. He answers a question from Ryabchenko about security officers' rights. Why does the KGB need troops? He goes on to detail some of the large-scale crimes tackled recently by the KGB, and provides figures for the composition of the various forces. Special forces are needed to deal with the now-frequent incidents in various parts of the country, he says, which often entail bloodshed. He argues in favor of passing a law on the security services before a more global law on security is tackled. Otherwise, he says, many years will elapse as all the ramifications are studied. The depoliticization issue ranks infringing upon the human rights of the members of the security services, he says—for example, if they cannot belong to the party of their choice. He makes the point that security is an all-Union function and that budgeting must take this into account. The work of the security services must be subjected to monitoring by the government he says.

At 1948 GMT the announcer then gives a summary of the results of today's sitting.

The recorded program ends at 1950 GMT.

Security Bill Discussed

LD0503082391 Moscow TASS in English 0814 GMT 5 Mar 91

[By TASS parliamentary correspondent Boris Zverev]

[Text] Moscow March 5 TASS—The Soviet parliament today began discussing the first reading of the bill on state security bodies in the Soviet Union.

The bill determines the purpose, the principles of activities, the obligations and rights of state security bodies and the system of control over their activities.

Soviet KGB Chairman Vladimir Kryuchkov delivered a report on the issue to the Soviet parliament's Council of the Union.

On Monday, parliament ratified several Soviet-German documents, including treaties on the final settlement of the German issue, on good-neighbourly relations, partnership and cooperation between the Soviet Union and Germany and on developing cooperation in the economic, industrial, scientific and technical spheres.

The parliament also "approved in principle" agreements on the terms of the temporary stay and planned withdrawal of Soviet troops from Germany and an intergovernmental agreement on some transitional measures.

Draft Security Law 'Basic Tenets' Adopted

LD0503140191

[Editorial Report] Moscow Domestic Service in Russian at 1200 GMT on 5 March broadcasts a 5-minute live or recorded report by correspondent Olga Vasilenko from the USSR Supreme Soviet session in the Kremlin on 5 March.

Vasilenko opens the report by noting that the Supreme Soviet has been discussing the draft law on state security bodies and that a group of 32 deputies are "working on another one." She reports that KGB Chairman Vladimir Kryuchkov presented the draft, which was debated by 15 deputies, including, among others: Andreyeyva, Bobyleva, Sobchak, Nemtsev, Ryzhov, Krayko, and Samarin.

After recounting some of the remarks made during the debate, Vasilenko reports: "A decision on this issue was adopted, where the basic tenets of the draft were approved in their first reading. It is not even a matter of concepts. Committees and commissions will work on the remarks and proposals, and, in an improved version, the draft law will be presented at the present session. The decision says: Let the Cabinet of Ministers present the Supreme Soviet with a list of (?legal) acts which must be passed after the law on the KGB."

Vasilenko closes the report by noting that deputies discussed but did not pass a draft decision on stabilizing the South Ossetian situation which would have included introducing a state of emergency. Deputies decided to return to discussion on the South Ossetian situation on 6 March, in the presence of either the president or the vice president.

USSR Supreme Soviet's 6 Mar Proceedings

LD0603210191

[Editorial report] Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian at 1845 GMT on 6 March begins a recorded account of the proceedings at the 6 March session of the USSR Supreme Soviet in the Kremlin.

The announcer says that the morning session opened with a discussion of the South Ossetia problem.

Vice President Yanayev says: The situation in South Ossetia remains tense; the economic situation is poor. He says around 37 people died in the area. The number of refugees is near 21,000. About 150 have been injured—possibly more. He adds that the USSR Interior Ministry (MVD) has increased patrols in the area. Operations are being undertaken to confiscate weapons. However, he says, the MVD bodies are limited in their work. Certain difficulties have been encountered in dealings with local officials.

Yanayev says that the Georgian president has appealed to the UN for help. It is now time to demand that the Georgian leadership fulfill recent USSR Supreme Soviet decisions, Yanayev adds.

He proposes that discussion not be prolonged here as the Federation Council will discuss this issue "in an hour." It is necessary to give a further opportunity to solve the problem without bloodshed, he concludes.

Deputies the begin to discuss the draft militia law.

Law and Order Committee Chairman Golik apologizes for appendixes of addenda presented with the main body of text. Why is a Union law necessary? He asks—because crime does not know borders and so there must be one unifying structure. We have taken into account republican laws, he says. More than a year has passed since the draft first began to be worked on. Many deputies, enterprises, militia workers and others have been involved in working on the draft. It is hoped that the law will strengthen efforts to preserve law and order. This law is extremely necessary. He adds that MVD officials are very keen that this law be adopted as quickly as possible as it will ensure law and order. He quotes from letters received from militiamen.

Golik goes on to say that all proposals received have been worked on. The law has had many changes, including its name: the name "Law on Soviet Militia" reflects its content and aims, he says. The Soviet militia is a state armed force for law and order. He notes that some deputies objected that the arming of the militia is being made known, as it could alarm some; however it is important that this is pointed out so criminals will know that this is for real, not a game.

Golik states that the role of the militia in providing social help to the population is described within the law. The militia's activities must be open to the public and the media. Militia workers are forbidden to indulge in entrepreneurial activities or to strike.

He says that Article 10, delimiting Union and republican militia responsibilities is a very important innovation: some crimes are interrepublican. For example, drugs are grown in one republic, processed in another, and sold in a third. Just as certain militia responsibilities are more clearly defined, he says, so also are their rights. He concludes by saying it is established that arms can be used only in extreme situations.

The announcer then says the draft law on the militia was adopted as a whole as a basis for further development. An article by article discussion ensues. Article 12 on the militia's rights is particularly discussed.

A deputy talks of the meagre wages paid to militiamen who risk their lives daily. Other workers receive much for working overtime. We must let the militia know that they are needed by society, he says.

Deputy Sushkov says that there should be a general law on overtime covering all workers. A deputy notes that there is shortage of militiamen by as much as one third. Deputies make further points concerning wages and compensation for unsocial hours.

Lukyanov proposes a vote on compensation for overtime. The vote is in favor.

The announcer notes that deputies voted on a timetable for beginning the law.

He adds that the Union referendum was discussed at the evening session. It also agreed on the appointment of Gubenko as Minister of Culture. Tomorrow the session will continue its work, he concludes.

The report ends at this point.

Further Coverage

LD0603211991

[Editorial report] Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian at 1912 GMT on 6 March continues its recorded account of the proceedings at the 6 March session of the USSR Supreme Soviet in the Kremlin.

The announcer says that the draft law on the militia was adopted as a whole as a basis for further development. An article by article discussion ensues. Article 12 on the militia's rights is particularly discussed.

At 1914 GMT a deputy puts forward a proposal on the draft law. Lukyanov asks if compensation for militiamen working on days off should be voted on. The question of a militia association to defend their rights is also to be put to the vote.

Interior Minister Pugo comes to the microphone to explain this point of the law. He says the draft law is in accord with foreign practice. He cites data on the unsocial hours worked by the militia.

A Finance Ministry official comes to the microphone to talk about the allocation of funds between republican and Union militia bodies to answer complaints that there is no money to pay militia overtime. He says that MVD and KGB people have special conditions to cover the fact that they have an abnormal working system. He says that militia work is bad for the health and anyone coming to work there should know this. His salary compensates for this.

A deputy talks of the meagre wages paid to militiamen who risk their lives daily. Other workers receive much for working overtime. We must let the militia know that they are needed by society, he says.

A deputy supports Pugo in giving militiamen sufficient rest days. Deputies speak about high levels of illness among militiamen.

Deputy Sushkov says that there should be a general law on overtime covering all workers. A deputy notes that there is shortage of militiamen by as much as one third. Deputies make further points concerning wages and compensation for unsocial hours.

At 1936 GMT Lukyanov proposes a vote on compensation for overtime. The vote is in favor.

The announcer notes that deputies voted on a timetable for beginning the law.

He adds that the Union referendum was discussed at the evening session. It also agreed on the appointment of Gubenko as Minister of Culture. Tomorrow the session will continue its work, he concludes.

The report ends at this point.

Deputies Discuss Union Referendum

LD0603220191 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1640 GMT 6 Mar 91

[From the "USSR Supreme Soviet Diary" program on proceedings at the USSR Supreme Soviet session in the Kremlin on 6 March, hosted by Vera Shchelkunova]

[Excerpts] [Shchelkunova] [passage omitted] At the evening session Chairman Lukyanov announced that he had received a number of notes and statements from deputies. [passage omitted]

Deputy Vasilyeva from Ust-Kamenogorsk reported that in Kazakhstan the wording of the question in the Union referendum has been changed, and asked that an appraisal be given of this. Anatoliy Ivanovich Lukyanov took the floor to give information about this.

[Begin Lukyanov recording] The session of the Kazakh SSR Supreme Soviet examined the wording of the USSR referendum and adopted the decision on including another wording in the USSR referendum—this is for your information. What is it? Do you consider it necessary to preserve the USSR as a union of sovereign states enjoying equal rights? This proposal was introduced to the Supreme Soviet, to us, by Asanbayev, chairman of the Kazakh SSR Supreme Soviet, in a telegram on 16 February. On 21 February I gave Asanbayev a telegram in which I wrote that the wording of the question in the USSR referendum results completely from the decision of the Fourth Congress of People's Deputies and cannot be changed. The Constitutional Control Committee also indicated that the wording cannot be changed, because then it is not possible to sum up the results throughout the country on various wordings.

Further, the Kazakh SSR Supreme Soviet Presidium discussed this question once again and confirmed that they had adopted a correct decision. Then today I passed this issue to the Federation Council. There was a frank conversation—just an hour and a half ago—with Comrade Nazarbayev, the Kazakhstan president. Either they want.... [changes thought] They are on the whole obliged, in the first place, to put to the vote the Union wording. If they want to augment it with something, fine, hold a republican referendum, separate voting papers, with a separate text. [end recording] [passage omitted]

[Begin recording] [Representative of the Interregional Group, Kuzmin] I would like to recall my speech when we discussed the referendum issue. Intensive work is going on by representatives of all the republics in preparing the concept of the Union treaty. It seems to me that the very signing of such a concept by the Federation Council would be a powerful stimulus for the referendum going off differently than it will go off now. It would pass off with considerably more success. I think that we ourselves are losing out with our haste.

[Lukyanov] Thank you. I am also forced to give an explanation. The Federation Council has now examined a draft of the treaty, and I think that it will be pubished. It has adopted it as a basis. Comrade Kuzmin has spoken, and I understand, he is a repressentative of the Interregional Group, or at least a member of that group. Maybe I should read the decision of the Interregional Group on what needs to be done. I will read it to you.

The following decision, comrades, has been made: to concentrate the whole might of this group on attaching this referendum to the activities of the president, to linking it with trust in the president, to holding appropriate actions so that this referendum does not take place. Read the appeal to the president which says that this will lead to 70 million refugees, it will move millions of families from where they are. This is a warning, but it turns out that for some people it is not a warning. It is possible to go up a blind alley to wreck the referendum. That is all. How many times have we said here that we support the country's destiny?

Fifth microphone, please.

[Novikov] Deputy Anatoliy Ivanovich Novikov. You nevertheless are saying that the Interregional Group has made a decision on not holding the referendum. There are two points here, and neither of them says that it should not be....

[Lukyanov, interrupting] Read it.

[Novikov] I quote. First, to stop preparations for the referendum and instruct the Constitutional Committee to draw up a conclusion on the conformity of the proposed wording and the referendum procedure with existing Union legislation.

Second, to consider it expedient to hold republican referendums, including in them approval of the draft Union treaty after it is agreed by the plenipotentiary representatives of the republics. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Supreme Soviet Adopts Police Law

LD0603134891 Moscow TASS in English 1252 GMT 6 Mar 91

[By TASS parliamentary correspondent Boris Zverev]

[Text] Moscow March 6 TASS—The Soviet parliament today passed the second reading of the law on police, regulating the activities of law enforcement bodies.

The first reading of the bill was discussed in June, but parliament failed to adopt the law then, which resulted in criticism on the part of policemen, who believed that the absense of legal regulations hampered their fight against crime.

The new law determines the tasks, rights, obligations and legal and organisational foundations for police bodies.

The law envisages setting up municipal militia in republics. It broadens the rights of republics in protecting public order and combating crime.

Parliamentary opposition insisted on depoliticising the police, which resulted in heated debates on the issue. In fact, this would mean banning the activities of Soviet Communist Party organisations in Interior Department bodies.

The proposal was not accepted. Many speakers noted that the law contains a provision, according to which "nobody, but the bodies or officials directly empowered by the law, has the right to interfere with the activities of police". They said the provision makes groundless statements about "the Soviet Communist Party interfering" in police activities.

Soyuz Urges Steps on Referendum

LD0603155791 Moscow TASS in English 1537 GMT 6 Mar 91

[By TASS parliamentary correspondent Ivan Ivanov: "Soyuz Group: Conditions Unsuitable for Referendum"—TASS headline]

[Text] Moscow March 6 TASS—"The Soyuz (Union) deputy group calls on the USSR Supreme Soviet and the Soviet president to demand that the leaders of republics and local authorities of all levels urgently take all necessary steps to ensure conditions for holding the March 17 referendum, securing free expression of their will by Soviet citizens and averting unlawful actions," this influential group, numbering over 600 deputies, said in a statement read out in the Soviet parliament today.

The statement says that the holding of a referendum on the country's future is only "admissible with the participation of all peoples in a normal situation".

Noting that attempts to create such a situation in the country have failed, making it impossible to hold a poll in which all peoples can express their will, the statement points to the fact that the parliaments in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldavia, Georgia and Armenia decided against the referendum, forbade their population to participate in the polls and created and stoked the atmosphere of moral, psychological and legal terror in their republics.

In Moldavia officials announced that repressive measures, up to and including criminal prosecution, will be used against people daring to participate in the referendum. Similar unlawful decisions have been made by some local authorities. The Azerbaijani parliament has not yet decided on its attitude to the referendum, the statement points out.

It stresses that in some regions, the scale of violence and bloodshed and the nature of conflicts are such that no referendum is possible, and attempts to hold it may result in still greater victimization and a civil war.

Under these conditions, the expression of the will of people is difficult and fresh conflicts are possible bringing about deeper confrontation in society and the aggravation of the total crisis in the country, the statement says.

Because of this, the Soyuz group calls on the Soviet parliament and the president to urgently take steps to create needed conditions for the referendum.

Deputies Discuss S. Ossetia

LD0603165991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1539 GMT 6 Feb 91

[TASS parliamentary correspondents Boris Zverev and Vladimir Isachenkov]

[Text] Moscow, 6 March. (TASS)—The members of the USSR Supreme Soviet, who today assembled for a joint session of the chambers, once more devoted part of their working time to examining the issue of the acute interethnic conflict in South Ossetia.

Speaking on this issue, Vice President Gennadiy Yanayev, informed deputies of the emergence of "definite prerequisites for positive moves" in settling the conflict; nevertheless, he drew attention to the tension that persists there.

In the name of the USSR president, Gennadiy Yanayev put forward a proposal not to resume discussion of this issue, so as not to disturb the political process "which seems to be underway in Georgia today." On this matter, as the vice president reported, the situation in South Ossetia is to be discussed today at the sitting of the Federation Council. Discussion of this problem is to be continued tomorrow.

Today the parliament also adopted the law on the Soviet militia after discussing it during its second reading—it is one of the legislative acts which is to regulate the activities of the law-enforcement bodies in the conditions of the reforms which are taking place in the USSR. The new law clearly defines the tasks of the militia, its rights and duties and the legal and organizational bases for its activity.

In the second half of the day, the members of parliament exchanged views on the circumstances surrounding the referendum on the future of the USSR which is due to take place on 17 March. The "Soyuz" group of deputies made a statement calling on the USSR Supreme Soviet and the president to demand that the leaders of the republics and the local authorities create all the necessary conditions for the citizens' free expression of will.

The deputies also agreed with the appointment of Nikolay Gubenko as USSR minister of culture.

Yanayev on S. Ossetia

LD0603225991 Moscow Central Television Second Program Network in Russian 1845 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Remarks by Vice President Gennadiy Yanayev at 6 March session of the Supreme Soviet in the Kremlin in Moscow—recorded; introductory paragraph read by announcer]

[Text] Today the deputies of the Union parliament began their working day with a discussion of the conflict in South Ossetia. By the way, the discussion was restricted to just a few speeches. Deputy Advadze reported the actions undertaken by the Georgian side aimed at restoring peace. He proposed that the deputies from Georgia go to the region of confrontation and take part in seeking ways to end the bloodshed.

Gennadiy Yanayev, vice president of the USSR, then spoke:

[Yanayev] Esteemed comrade chairman, esteemed deputies. I think that we should commence the analysis of the situation in South Ossetia today from the moment when the well-known decision of the USSR Supreme Soviet was adopted, since the deputies' commission which reported at the last sitting gave an objective picture, and there is no need to make any sort of deep excursion into the past.

The 20 February decision of the USSR Supreme Soviet on the situation in the South Ossetian autonomous oblast, on measures to stabilize the situation in the region, and also the message in this connection to Comrade Lukyanov from the chairman of the Georgian Supreme Soviet, have created certain prerequisites for positive movement in settling the inter-ethnic conflict in this region.

At the same time, the opportunities for reconciliation which have appeared remain totally unclaimed by both sides and have not been put in motion. The situation in the oblast remains tense. The confrontation between the sides is continuing. The economic situation, too, has not improved; as a result of two explosions in a cliff, a section of the Dzhava-Tskhinvali detour road has been blocked. Industrial enterprises are still not working. There are interruptions in electricity and water supplies.

According to our information there are some 1,500 Georgian militants concentrated around Tskhinvali. These are mainly from the Patri-Georgiy formations, which are headed by a certain Adamiya, chairman of the Commission on Defense, National Security, and Law and Order of the Georgian Supreme Soviet. The Ossetians' forces comprise several combat groups numbering 35-50 each. They are concentrated mainly in Tskhinvali and Dzhava. Both the Georgian and Ossetian formations have armored equipment and automatic weapons in their arsenals.

Confrontation between them is accompanied by attacks on peaceful inhabitants, night-time shootouts, setting fire to homes, and explosions on the roads. As a result, the number of refugees is increasing; the overall total of these is now about 21,000, and about 11,000 of these are Ossetians. The number of victims is also increasing. According to figures from the USSR Ministry of the Interior, since the start of the conflict 37 people have died; 20 of these Georgians and 17 Ossetians; 150 people have been injured and one can suppose that the number of victims is greater. There are no figures from outlying villages. One cannot avoid noting that actions to compromise the internal troops have intensified. Thus, an armored transport of Georgian militants was inscribed with the number of a troop unit of the internal forces.

The USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs, in accordance with orders from the USSR Cabinet of Ministers—here are these orders, I have brought them along with me. They embrace a whole range of questions connected with the normalization of economic and social life, including restoration of power supplies, instruction to the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs to send in additional contingents, and so on. In spite of this, all the same...[changes thought] Oh, yes—the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs, in accordance with orders from the USSR Cabinet of Ministers of 1 March, has intensified patrols and the checking of roads. All freight entering the oblast is accompanied by details of internal forces. Measures are being taken to restore the functions of the Directorate of Internal Affairs of the South Ossetian autonomous oblast, providing it with extra cadres, and allocating to it the necessary technical means and other property.

In order to help maintain social order in the populated areas and on the transport routes, the necessary numbers of operational staff are being sent to the oblast from other internal affairs bodies of the country. Weapons are being confiscated. True, no more than 150 guns have been confiscated, including 16 automatic weapons and 86 rifles.

At the same time, the possibilities of the internal troops are limited, due to the fact that the period of the state of emergency regime has been prolonged only in the town of Tskhinvali, and even this expires on 11 March. Khabuliani, Georgian minister of internal affairs, asked the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs to send an additional contingent of internal troops to the region. However, this request did not comply with the procedure set out by the USSR law of 26 March, 1990, which states that it should be sent via the republican council of ministers. It was proposed that the prescribed procedure be observed. However, no reply has yet been received from the Georgian side.

The chairman of the Georgian Supreme Soviet, in a personal telephone conversation with the minister of internal affairs, stated that there was no need for additional troops or the introduction of a state of emergency throughout South Ossetia. Furthermore, the chairman of the Supreme Soviet of Georgia, on behalf of the Supreme Soviet, has appealed for help to the United Nations Organization, to the peoples, governments, and countries of the world.

Taking account of the speech made here today by Deputy Advadze, I would not like to concentrate on this message from the chairman of the Supreme Soviet of Georgia. Evidently, however, the time has come for us to demand that the Georgian leadership immediately fulfil the 7 January decree of the USSR president and the 20 February decision of the USSR Supreme Soviet.

Taking account of the fact, comrades, that yesterday a reply was made, a proposal from the chairman of the Supreme Soviet of Georgia, I—on behalf of the leadership and the president too—would like to put forward the following proposal: As a session of the Federation Council is due to begin one hour from now and hear the opinions of the sides and information from our law enforcement bodies, that we do not begin a debate here now in case we disrupt the political process which seems to be taking shape in Georgia. Please understand that the country's top leadership, fulfilling the decision of the Supreme Soviet—by the way, it is an absolutely correct decision, we are in agreement with it—have proceeded from the position of trying to avoid even greater bloodshed. Let us give them one more chance to resolve the problem by political methods.

Gorbachev Submits Security Council Nominees 7 Mar

LD0703080191 Moscow TASS in English 0747 GMT 7 Mar 91

[By TASS parliamentary correspondent Vladimir Isachenkov]

[Text] Moscow March 7 TASS—President Mikhail Gorbachev requested the Soviet parliament's agreement to the appointment of the following Security Council members: Vice President Gennadiy Yanayev, Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov, Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, KGB Chairman Vladimir Kryuchkov, Interior Minister Boris Pugo, Defence Minister Dmitriy Yazov, as well as Vadim Bakatin, Valeriy Boldin and Yevgeniy Primakov.

The last three were members of the USSR Presidential Council dissolved in January 1991.

An appropriate document was today circulated at the Soviet parliament before the start of a joint session.

Supreme Soviet Approves Members

LD0703121491 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1000 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Report on Supreme Soviet session by parliamentary correspondent Andrey Nikiferov]

[Text] Good afternoon, esteemed listeners. USSR President Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev addressed deputies at the session today. He briefed the Supreme Soviet on the recent meeting of the Federation Council. A good deal was done to harmonize the positions of republics at that meeting and there were positive solutions there; for example, such important points like the delimitation of powers between the Union and the republics and a flexible procedure for republics to join the Union, either independently or within another republic. The draft, which has been taken as a basis, will be forwarded to the Supreme Soviets of republics and will be published. Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev also spoke about the Cabinet of Ministers meeting. The situation made it necessary to come back to the economic agreement between republics. Despite the positive effect of these documents, which are the basis for the functioning of the economy, the situation so far has not improved. Economic links have been disrupted too drastically and processes of disintegration are too strong. In the current situation, everyone is trying to save himself on his own, but this is practically impossible.

One cannot fail to mention yet another thing, the president continued. The process of acquiring sovereignty, which started in republics, later started reaching such levels that the striving to observe the interests of peoples has become irrelevant. Soon it will be a question of individual comrades striving to satisfy their political ambition by declaring the sovereignty of a rayon or a street. All this has also had a negative effect on economic processes.

This sums up the Cabinet of Ministers' meeting. The USSR president answered numerous questions from deputies, including about South Ossetia. The president expressed the hope that it would be possible to solve that problem amicably, where the country's Supreme Soviet and government would be acting in close contact with the Georgian Supreme Soviet and government.

The president was advised to address the people on television on the eve of the referendum on the issue of preserving a renewed Union and Mikhail Sergeyevich said he would think about it and, perhaps, such an address would take place.

There was also the following question: Is not altering ownership relations in our country a counter-revolution? Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev expressed his firm conviction that reforming ownership relations and advancing toward a mixed economy would make it possible to reinforce motivations for work and to put the people's labor potential to use, something that can only be welcomed, and that in no way contradicts the historical choice.

Then the USSR president submitted the composition of the Security Council, a body which is being set up under the USSR president, for examination by the Supreme Soviet. I will give the names nominated by Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev and supported by the Federation Council. They include Comrades Yanayev, Pavlov, Bakatin, Bessmertnykh, Boldin, Kryuchkov, Primakov, Pugo, and Yazov. Following the vote that was taken, all the above candidates except two were approved as members of the Security Council. The two comrades who failed to get the necessary number of votes were Comrades Boldin and Primakov. Well, whereas one need not present Yevgeniy Maksimovich [Primakov] to our listners, I will say a few about Valeriy Ivanovich Boldin. He plays the role of a coordinator of activity in the presidential apparatus. So, the result of the vote on these two comrades caused the USSR president's bewilderment. He said that he had not expected such results, and arguing for his choice, asked the Supreme Soviet to return to these candidates again. I think this will be done today.

A few more words about the cadre appointments carried out by the USSR Supreme Soviet. Vladimir Yefimovich Orlov has become finance minister, Vladislav Grigoryevich Kolesnikov has become minister of the electronic industry, and Vadim Nikitovich Kirichenko has become head of the state committee for statistics. The session continues.

[Moscow Domestic Service in Russian at 1130 GMT on 7 March, in updating the list of officials approved by the USSR Supreme Soviet, adds the following names and positions to those mentioned above: Yevgeniy Primakov as USSR Security Council member, Gerashchenko as USSR State Bank chairman, and Kulikov as USSR State Bank deputy chairman.]

Primakov Comments on Council

LD0703143491 Moscow TASS in English 1420 GMT 7 Mar 91

[By legislative correspondent Boris Zverev]

[Text] Moscow March 7 TASS—The Soviet parliament today agreed with the Soviet president's appointment of eight members of the USSR Security Council.

They are Vice President Gennadiy Yanayev, Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov, Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, KGB Chairman Vladimir Kryuchkov, Interior Minister Boris Pugo, Defence Minister Dmitriy

Yazov, as well as Vadim Bakatin and Yevgeniy Primakov, who were members of the Presidential Council dissolved in January 1991.

In compliance with the Soviet Constitution, the Security Council will draft recommendations to implement all-Union policy on the country's defence, to maintain its reliable state, economic and ecological security, to overcome natural calamities and other emergency situations and to ensure stability and law and order in society.

It was a surprise for many legislators that Yevgeniy Primakov, the special presidential envoy, who participated in all talks to overcome the Gulf crisis, failed to collect support after the first voting.

Valeriy Boldin, head of the presidential staff, also was voted down.

At Gorbachev's request, the two candidates were discussed again. Primakov was approved after the second vote (277 for, 37 against, with 43 abstaining). Boldin collected 245 votes after the second attempt (53 against, with 42 abstaining).

However, this is less than 50 per cent of the total number of legislators. Parliament Chairman Anatoliy Lukyanov said that the candidacy "returns again for the president's consideration+.

In addition, the legislature today appointed Viktor Gerashchenko chairman of the USSR State Bank, Valerian Kulikov his first deputy and agreed to the appointment of three new ministers: Finance Minister Vladimir Orlov, Electronic Industry Minister Vladislav Kolesnikov and Chairman of the State Statistics Committee Vadim Kirichenko.

Gorbachev Criticizes 'Democrats' in Address

LD0703124191 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1100 GMT 7 Mar 91

[By parliamentary correspondent Andrey Zuyev]

[Excerpt] Today, on the eve of the holiday, President Gorbachev spoke at the joint sitting of the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities. He spoke about the fact that yesterday a draft Union treaty was examined at the Council of the Federation and also about the Cabinet of Ministers meeting.

I will not retell it, but note only that the Russian deputies got what was coming to them more than once. According to the president's words, some of them were doing the rounds of the miners and calling on them to strike. The democratic deputies who on their trips abroad—in his own words—called for not giving credits to our country, got what was coming to them as well. The president proposed to set up a deputies' commission to examine this issue. We—journalists and the democratic press—got what was coming to us as well. The president called us "the audience," as he could not call us otherwise. There was the question of the agony of democrats. Why did democrats and democratic undertakings today provoke such criticism from the president? [passage omitted]

Gorbachev on Adoption of Draft Union Treaty

LD0703102591 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0940 GMT 7 Mar 91

[By TASS parliamentary correspondent Ivan Ivanov]

[Text] Moscow, 7 Mar (TASS)—The USSR Federation Council has adopted, as a basis, the draft Union treaty which was prepared by representatives from the majority of the republics and has decided to send it for further agreement by the Supreme Soviets of the republics. USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev reported this to members of the Soviet parliament today.

"The main idea in the document is the serious reformation of our multiethnic state, while preserving it as a federation," the head of state said in informing the members of parliament about the session of the council which took place on Wednesday.

He noted that on nine of the ten main issues in the treaty which had alternative variations, a common stance has been worked out. Only on the principle of representation for the republics in the future supreme body of authority had they failed to reach a consensus.

Mikhail Gorbachev also noted that taking into account the declarations of sovereignty from the former autonomous republics, the draft treaty permits both their direct membership in the Union and membership as part of another republic (according to the existing constitution the autonomous republics form part of the Union republics).

Then the head of state briefed deputies about the session of the USSR Cabinet of Ministers held on 4 March. He reported that the main question which it is examined was "to stop the collapse of our national economy had to prevent the processes of disintegration in the economy from developing," the processes in the economy over the first two months of 1991 were analyzed.

Mikhail Gorbachev said that "the situation in the economy is still a most serious one; it has not only not erased, it is even growing more acute." The reason for this is the fact that economic ties have been destroyed. In breaking economic ties, "we have moved toward feudal fragmentation," he said.

The president emphasized that the situation which has developed can only be overcome by all republics working together. He reported that the Cabinet of Ministers had adopted a decision to set up a group to urgently solve economic questions headed by Vitaliy Doguzhiyev, first USSR deputy prime miniser, which would also include the first deputy chairmen of the government of the republics.

Mikhail Gorbachev also reported that the work on preparing an agreement between the Union and the republics on retail price reform had been completed, and that the draft agreement had been signed by all the republics, including Russia.

Gorbachev Addresses Supreme Soviet on Economy

LD0703105991 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1000 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] The country's Supreme Soviet session began its work today with a speech by USSR President Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev. The leader of the state delivered a report on the meeting of the Council of the Federation which took place yesterday. In connection with this, he dwelt on a number of key elements of the present situation in our Union.

Having stressed that the economy is in a most serious state, the president called the tendency of republics and regions to save themselves individually—which is being observed now—a most grave mistake. The situation is such, Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev said, that we can get out of the critical situation only by cooperating and not by fencing ourselves off. We need to restore normal economic links, he continued. The policy leading the country to feudal fragmentation did a poor service to the economic and social sphere.

The president called on the members of the USSR Supreme Soviet to not delay the examination of the draft laws that facilitate the transfer of the Soviet economy to market relations. He also answered parliamentarians' questions.

The examination of candidatures to the USSR Security Council began at the morning session.

Supreme Soviet Statement on German Treaties

PM0603121991 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 6 Mar 91 Second Edition pp 1,4

["USSR Supreme Soviet Statement" adopted 4 March]

[Text] Today the USSR Supreme Soviet ratified three highly important treaties relating to the German settlement and the future of Soviet-German relations. They are the Treaty on a Final Settlement in Relation to Germany, the USSR-FRG Treaty on Good-Neighborliness, Partnership, and Cooperation, and the USSR-FRG Treaty on Developing Wide-Ranging Cooperation in the Sphere of the Economy, Industry, Science, and Technology.

The USSR Supreme Soviet considers that this set of documents is of historic significance, disposes of World War II, considers the new relations that have taken shape in Europe and the world, and opens a new era of lasting peace and wide-ranging cooperation between the Soviet and German peoples.

USSR people's deputies and members of the USSR Supreme Soviet express the hope that Germany's pledge that peace and peace alone will emanate from German territory will be steadfastly observed and organically fit in with the new structures of security and cooperation in Europe. The Soviet people, who suffered incalculable casualties when repulsing Nazi aggression, are entitled to expect the united Germany to act with consideration for the lessons of the past and the responsibility placed on it now and in the future. While advancing along this path, the German people can always count on the Soviet Union's support and solidarity. In many respects the complexion of the Europe of the future and the state of affairs in the world depend on how Soviet-German relations develop.

The clauses of the treaties on the definitive nature of current German borders and Germany's renunciation of any territorial claims, along with all its military-political commitments, including the commitments not to produce or acquire nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons, are of fundamental importance. The USSR Supreme Soviet proceeds on the premise that human rights will be consistently observed in the united Germany and that, in particular, discrimination against citizens of what was the GDR for political or other reasons will be precluded.

The USSR Supreme Soviet has concluded that the ratified treaties accord with the Soviet Union's national and state interests.

The sides' practical commitments arising from these treaties also ensure the resolution of questions linked with the development of wide-ranging, mutually beneficial economic and scientific cooperation.

The USSR Supreme Soviet instructs the USSR Cabinet of Ministers and the relevant departments and organizations to take the requisite steps to implement the provisions of the ratified treaties and to ensure that the sides strictly observe their ensuing commitments. The USSR Supreme Soviet will keep all these questions which are of vital importance for the Soviet Union under its unremitting supervision.

[Signed] The USSR Supreme Soviet

The Kremlin, Moscow, 4 March 1991.

Political & Social

Ostroumov Appointed Gorbachev's CPSU Assistant

LD0703085991 Moscow TASS in English 0819 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow March 7 TASS—The GLASNOST weekly reports that a former reader to Soviet Communist Party leader Mikhail Gorbachev, Georgiy Ostroumov, was appointed a new assistant to the CPSU leader.

Anatoliy Lushchikov was relieved of his post of assistant to the CPSU leader due to his retirement.

Two new assistants to the Soviet president were appointed earlier. One of them is Vladimir Yegorov, who worked as reader to the CPSU leader. The second is Oleg Ozhereliyev, who was deputy head of the Humanitarian Department of the CPSU Central Committee.

Gorbachev Chairs Council of the Federation

LD0603185591 Moscow TASS in English 1840 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow March 6 TASS—The Soviet Federation Council met in the Kremlin today under the chairmanship of President Mikhail Gorbachev. The council discussed a draft new Union treaty prepared by plenipotentiary representatives of republics with the participation of the Federation Council and Soviet Parliament experts.

The Federation Council positively assessed the work done. During discussion, speakers made a number of observations and additions and made the wording more precise. The council basically adopted the draft union treaty and referred it for consideration to republican parliaments.

The council heard information on the situation in South Ossetia. The situation there remains extremely tense. People get killed by bandit groups. Both Ossetians, Georgians and members of other nationalities suffer from such a state of affairs. The Federation Council recognised it necessary to take urgent additional measures to ensure conditions for normal everyday life of the population in areas affected by clashes and absolute implementation of the presidential decree which envisages the only possible way to normalise the situation.

The Federation Council supported measures mapped out by the USSR cabinet of ministers in the interest of implementing agreements on economic matters and on food. The council emphasised the need to give a boost to this work and to ensure the restoration of economic ties and deliveries. The main task now is to prevent a production downswing and to maintain a normal work pace.

The Federation Council meeting was also attended by USSR Parliament Chairman Anatoliy Lukyanov, Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov and cabinet ministers.

Officials on Union Treaty Talks

LD0603223391 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Announcer-introduced report by V. Stepanyuk on meeting of USSR Federation Council in Moscow, chaired by USSR President Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev, including interviews with Nursultan Abishevich Nazarbeyev, president of Kazakhstan; Nikolay Ivanovich Dementey, chairman of the Belorussian Supreme Soviet; and V.N. Stepanov, chairman of the Kazakh Supreme Soviet, by unidentified correspondent, on 6 March; from the "Vremya" newscast—recorded]

[Text] As has already been reported, plenipotentiary representatives of the republics who held talks on preparing the text of a new Union Treaty have been carrying out a great deal of effective work. The new approaches have enabled many problems to be solved. The draft Union treaty has virtually been prepared. How did the debate on this question go today at the Federation Council under the chairmanship of Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev? Here is a report from our correspondents.

[Stepanyuk] First of all, one should point out that the Federation Council gave a positive appraisal of the work done. However, during the debate, remarks and additional comments were made and the corresponding clarifications were made to this document. The Council adopted the draft as a basis and sent it to the Supreme Soviets of the republics for their examination. It will be published in the press.

Information was also heard about the situation in South Ossetia. It remains extremely tense. The Federation Council acknowledged the need to adopt urgent additional measures with regard to support in the population of the areas affected by the clashes, and also the unconditional fulfillment of the presidential decree which provides for the only possible way to a normalization of the situation.

A report was heard by comrade Anzimb, chairman of the Abkhaz Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic Supreme Soviet, and the Federation Council issued an appropriate instruction.

The Federation Council supported the measures mapped out by the USSR Cabinet of Ministers in the interests of fulfilling the agreement on economic questions and food. The main task now, it was noted at the session, is to prevent a slump in production and to support a normal labor rhythm.

In the intervals between the sittings we held interviews with members of the Federation Council.

[Correspondent] Nursultan Abishevich [Nazarbayev], what do you think: Has the path toward the signing of a Union Treaty been a long one, and has today's session brought this nearer?

[Nazarbayev] I think that we have come closer to signing a Union Treaty. The plenipotentiary representatives of the republics which will be part of the Federation, have been working intensively over the past few months together with experts, and they have worked out a draft treaty which is today being discussed by the Federation Council. There were 10 differences of opinion on 10 questions, and I believe that of these seven will be removed today. The main question of the treaty—well, the main points—are that our state will be a sovereign, federal, and democratic state, a union will be the Union of Sovereign States—a union of sovereign states with equal rights.

In other words, this equality of rights for all peoples populating our country is given special emphasis. Therefore, we have written into the text of our referendum—we are taking part in a Union referendum—that the following question is asked: Do you consider it necessary to preserve the USSR as a union of sovereign states with equal rights? I have just been talking to scientists and jurists, and they consider that this will be the most correct way, since the question is overloaded with regard to the text in which it was adopted at the Congress of USSR People's Deputies.

Therefore, we will overcome these differences and then there will be discussions in the Supreme Soviet. At the moment we are deciding where it will be possible to publish this treaty now so that people can see what kind of state we are intending to preserve. We are intending to preserve it. Unfortunately, only seven republics are taking part today, and the autonomous republics which declared themselves to be union republics are also taking part. The whole question now boils down to this: If the former autonomous republics, which proclaimed themselves union republics, and simultaneously being a part of Russia, have an equal quota in a future parliament, then again the republics—we, Kazakhstan, let's stay—will lose out in terms of numbers of deputies. We have agreed that this question should be examined separately and a mutually acceptable decision found.

[Correspondent] Nikolay Ivanovich [Dementey], judging from your mood it would seem that some kind of agreement has already been reached that there will be progress toward a Union treaty.

[Dementey] Well, this process is still, so to speak, in the developing stage. Such a document has been prepared. A document has been prepared, it has been hammered out, so to speak, collectively. A great number of people representing the union republics and the autonomous republics have participated in it. Therefore, it differs very much from preceding drafts. Twenty five articles remain, and these articles contain alternative proposals. They even come from groups of union republics and autonomous republics. The task today of the members of the Federation, with the participation of the union and the autonomous republics, is to elucidate those alternative proposals which exist in this draft, and conceptually to exchange opinions on separate positions of the draft, so that this document will be ready for examination in the Supreme Soviets of the union republics.

[V.N. Stepanov, chairman of the Kazakh Supreme Soviet] In general, I think the Federation Council is doing very fruitful work. We have come quite a way forward. Most of the participants, members of this Federation, have spoken in favor of publishing—of first approving and adopting as a basis the version of a Union Treaty, or draft Union Treaty, which has just been proposed, to approve it, and publishing it in the press. Generally speaking, it seems to me that this is a major political step. I would not say that this is a victory day; we can talk about a victory when this Union Treaty is signed. There is difficult and painstaking work ahead on a whole number of articles of the Union Treaty, but I think that, with the relations of mutual understanding which have been typical of today's session of the Federation Council, we will succeed in going forward, concluding, and renewing the Union Treaty and a union of sovereign states.

Trubin Warns Against Hampering Referendum

LD0703145491 Moscow TASS in English 1433 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow March 7 TASS—Soviet Procurator-General Nikolay Trubin warned today that those attempting to prevent the March 17 referendum on the future of the Soviet Union will, in accordance with the law, be punished with imprisonment for up to five years.

Speaking in a TASS interview, he said that the existing constitution and legislation will remain in force pending the signing of a new Soviet Union treaty.

He expressed regret that the parliaments in Lithuania and some other constituent republics decided not to have anything to do with the referendum.

Thereby, they effectively deprive citizens of the right to share in running the country, which is proclaimed not only in Soviet laws but also in the universal declaration of human rights and other international covenants, Trubin said.

He said that a positive answer by people in any republic to the referendum's question of whether the USSR should be preserved as an updated federation of equal, sovereign republics will not at all invalidate the constitutional provision guaranteeing free secession from the USSR.

If violations of the law during the referendum influence its results, the procurator-general has the right to demand that the central commission on the referendum organise repeat voting either in the particular area or across the nation within the next year.

'Propaganda Duel' Expected Between Camps

LD0603212691 Moscow TASS in English 2053 GMT 6 Mar 91

[By TASS World Service correspondent Aleksandr Mineyev]

[Text] Moscow March 6 TASS—Political passions over a March 17 all-Union referendum on the future of the USSR as a single state are running high.

In the Soviet Parliament, the deputies' influential group Soyuz, which upholds the maintenance of the present federal state, urged the Soviet parliament and the president immediately to take measures to create conditions for the holding of the referendum.

The group's statement points out that in the present situation the possibility of a free expression of the will of all peoples is being frustrated and that the parliaments of six out of 15 republics (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldavia, Georgia and Armenia) decided not to hold an all-union referendum, banned the population from taking part in it and brought about an atmosphere of moral, psychological and juridical terror. In a number of regions the scope of violence is such that a referendum is impossible and can even lead to a civil war.

The USSR Committee for Constitutional Compliance today issued a statement declaring as running counter to the USSR Constitution "any acts, which directly or indirectly prevent citizens of the USSR from freely exercising their right to participate in a referendum".

Nevertheless, Mircea Snegur, the president of Moldavia, where the political map is particularly heterogeneous, stated today that local councils which would hold a referendum on March 17 in defiance of the Moldavian parliament decision might be dissolved and their organisers could be called to account.

Councils representing mainly Russian-speaking people in the Dniester area and Turkish-speaking people in the south of Moldavia intend to participate in the referendum.

The Latvian parliament also resolved today that the all-union referendum on the territory of Latvia "will have no legal consequences". This is motivated by last year's declaration of the republic's independence and the results of the March 3 public opinion poll which revealed the predominance of anti-union sentiments.

However, representatives of 17 Latvian socio-political organisations which support of idea of a renewed union disagree with the way the question has been put by the parliament. These representatives, who met for a conference in Riga today, stated that the republican poll cannot be the alternative to an all-union referendum. Therefore, the Latvian Communist Party and the organisations supporting it are actively preparing for the March 17 plebiscite.

Members of the Azerbaijan parliament today expressed varied attitudes to the all-union referendum. Some deputies believe that, in the light of the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh (an Azerbaijan region populated predominantly by Armenians), there can be no question of holding a referendum in the republic on March 17. The discussion was postponed until Thursday pending news from the USSR Federation Council.

Meanwhile the Federation Council, at its today's meeting, basically adopted a draft union treaty prepared by plenipotentiary representatives of the republics and referred the document for discussion to republics. The draft union treaty defines a new state formation as a union of sovereign states.

On Tuesday such a union was advocated by Ukrainian parliament president Leonid Kravchuk during his television appearance in the republic's West where opposition to a union treaty is particulary strong.

Kravchuk called on various political and ethnic groups to unite on the eve of the all-union referendum. The people of the Ukraine want not simply sovereignty but such a union in which this republic would be a state with appropriate rights and duties, he believes.

However, complexities also arise in those republics where a positive outcome of the referendum practically raises no doubt (Russia as a whole, Byelorussia, Kazakhstan and Central Asia). In the Russian federation—where both an all-union referendum on the future of the USSR and a republican one on instituting the office of a president will be held on the same day—various political groups in some regions are calling on people to boycott either this or that plebiscite. This divide also runs between supporters of the present central authorities and Russian parliament leader Boris Yeltsin.

In point of fact, main positions with regard to the referendum on the future of the USSR have become clear. The ten days that remain before the referendum are promising to be a period of a keen propaganda duel between two opposing political camps and of active vote canvassing.

Commission Chairman Interviewed on Referendum

LD0703150391 Moscow TASS in English 1414 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow March 7 TASS—"The question that the referendum will ask voters on March 17 is vitally important to our state and each citizen should have an opportunity and right to express his view on the issue," Vladimir Orlov, who heads the central commission of the USSR referendum, said in an interview published in the latest issue of the GLASNOST WEEKLY.

He points out that "by making decisions that block the all-union referendum, republican parliaments put themselves in a complicated situation. Under the USSR Constitution, higher bodies of state authority do not have grounds to deny citizens an opportunity to express their views on the future of our state. Denying citizens an opportunity to participate in a referendum is a violation of the right proclaimed in the universal declaration of human rights."

"Citizens apply to the USSR Supreme Soviet and the referendum's central commission asking to guarantee to them the right to participate in the referendum, which is granted to them by the Soviet Constitution," Orlov stressed.

He expressed the conviction that "the referendum can and should become the unifying element that will allow the country to preserve stability and guarantee the peaceful life and work of the Soviet people."

The weekly also publishes the results of the all-union survey "Policy and People: February 1991," conducted by the sociological research centre at the Academy Of Social Sciences of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee.

During the poll, 1,575 people from 18 regions of the country, or 61 per cent of the respondents, favoured holding the referendum, 71 per cent said they would take part in it and 68 per cent said they would answer positively the question put at the referendum.

Regional Attitudes Towards Referendum

91UN0973A Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 28 Feb 91 p 2

[Roundup of reports from around the country on upcoming referendum, with concluding commentary by L. Nikitinskiy, KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA commentator on legal issues: "The Referendum: The Center Is 'For,' If You Do Not Mind"]

[Text] "The referendum is one of the elements of so-called direct democracy, but the degree of its true democratism depends first of all on the class makeup of the state where it is conducted. For instance, in bourgeois countries with authoritarian regimes, the referendum is often used as a means of imposing upon the populace one or another reactionary law."

Great Soviet Encyclopedia, Third Edition, vol. 22, 1975

"...Only in the country where socialism has won is the referendum a true expression of the will of the entire Soviet nation, and a true direct participation of the people in the resolution of legislative issues."

Great Soviet Encyclopedia, First Edition, vol. 48, 1941

RIGA

The minority faction "Equality" in the Latvian Supreme Soviet and the republic Interfront appealed to republic residents to participate in the upcoming republic referendum on 3 March. They ask the voters, however, to show up at the election precincts and to strike out both "yes" and "no" answers.

This demand, in their opinion, is necessitated by the faulty wording of the question: Are you for the democratic, independent Latvian Republic?" Among other reasons, they are advocating participation in this poll—being conducted as an alternative to the Union referendum—because warnings addressed to potential no-shows had already been heard on television: Failure to participate will be regarded as refusal to become a citizen of the republic. Those who are not permitted to participate in the upcoming 3 March republic poll are the mentally ill and military and MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs] personnel. To create the best possible conditions for the people to express their will, a generous sum of 4.2 million rubles has been allocated.

The Baltic Military District Commander, Colonel General F. Kuzmin, said at a meeting with voters that if the city authorities do not ensure the conduct of the USSR referendum on 17 March, the military disctrict can carry out this task.

By K. Markaryan.

TALLINN

The Estonian Government sent invitations to the heads of governments of 30 countries requesting that they send their state representatives to the republic by the beginning of the referendum planned for 3 March. According to the Estonian Republic Ministry of Foreign Affairs Information Bureau, the European Parliament, the Council of Europe, and the Nordic Council have already accepted the invitation.

In a report on the visit by A. Ruutel, chairman of the Estonian Supreme Soviet, to the city of Sillamae, MOLODEZH ESTONII says: "In reply to the question on conducting the all-Union referendum on the question of preservation of the USSR, A. Ruutel said that it is unlikely that the republic would participate, but it would not create obstacles for those who want to do otherwise."

By TASS.

KISHINEV

It is difficult to forecast the results of the referendum in Moldova, provided it takes place, of course. The national alliance for independence "16 December"—which recently became an umbrella for the National Front of Moldova [NFM] and a number of parties and civic movements that generally support its ideology—are unquestionably "against" both signing the Union treaty in any form and the referendum itself. The Dnestr area is unquestionably "for." The Gagauz area, which is still nursing the idea of becoming a subject of the renewed federation, also supports the referendum idea. Even in Kishinev, which is from time to time being shaken by the ad hoc rallies of NFM supporters, things are far from crystal clear. It appears that a considerable part of the city population—especially the Russian-speaking one, which constitutes roughly one half of the total and is scared by the ghosts of "Romanization," loss of citizenship, and discrimination on ethnic grounds—will vote "for."

On 19 February the Moldovan parliament, by a majority vote, took a stand against the 17 March referendum on the territory of the republic.

By A. Khantsevich.

I. Smirnov, chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Dnestr Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic [SSR] (declared illegal by the Moldovan parliament) informs: Despite the fact that Moldova SSR Supreme Soviet refuses to conduct the all-Union referendum, it will take place in the Dnestr area. In the opinion of Moldovan Supreme Soviet Deputy G. Pologov, the referendum will also take place in the city of Bendery and in enterprises and organizations of a number of republic rayons and cities.

It was noted at the session of the Moldovan Supreme Soviet that the Dnestr area decision to hold the referendum may lead to a worsening of the sociopolitical situation in the republic.

By TASS.

YEREVAN

As is known, the Armenian Supreme Soviet adopted a resolution stating that it "considers the question of the 17 March 1991 referendum on the preservation of the USSR insufficiently clearly formulated, and thus the conduct of the referendum unacceptable."

Meanwhile, on 18 February a rally organized in front of the parliament building by Paruyr Ayrikyan's party, the Union for National Determination, demanded the immediate adoption of a law on referendums and the holding of one within two weeks, with the ballot containing just one question: "Do you want Armenia to stay within the Soviet Union?"

The referendum is indeed needed, in the opinion of the Armenian Communist Party Central Committee. However, the proposed question is poorly formulated. It is not clear what kind of renewed federation people are asked to vote for. If the question is reformulated to read something like "Are you for the Union of sovereign states?" then we are for the referendum, I was told at the Central Committee Secretariat.

When to conduct the referendum and what question to put on the ballot will be decided as soon as the parliament adopts the Law on Referendums.

By V. Aloyan.

TBILISI

The Republic of Georgia Supreme Soviet has already discussed, without too much noise or arguments, the issue of the upcoming all- Union referendum on 30 January. The deputies decided that Georgia will not participate. The republic referendum is set for 31 March. The population of Georgia will express its opinion on the issue of republic independence.

There do not seem to be alternative opinions. Is the matter settled?

By KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA correspondent.

TASHKENT

On 20 February the Uzbek SSR Supreme Soviet Presidium heard the report of K.A. Akhmedov, chairman of the republic central commission on the USSR referendum, on the progress of preparations for the all- Union referendum. It has been decided to distribute an additional ballot, together with the officially approved one, on referendum day. This ballot will contain one question: "Do you agree to Uzbekistan staying in the renewed Union (federation) as a sovereign equal republic?"

The republic press has published the resolution of the Uzbek SSR Supreme Soviet supporting the appeal of the Kazakh SSR Supreme Soviet to the Supreme Soviets of USSR republics on the necessity of strengthening the unity of sovereign republics within the renewed USSR federation.

There are also other opinions.

Mohammad Solikh, writer, Uzbek SSR people's deputy, and chairman of the democratic party "Erk" ("Freedom"):

"Although our party is not officially registered, we have about 7,000 supporters, and I will speak on their behalf. We will say "no" to the Union we do not know. It is still not known what it is envisioned to be and what it will become. We see the all-Union referendum as an attempt to get this commitment from the republics in advance, and then to use it to impose on them the center's ideas and its vision of the Union. Thus, it will be the center again that will make the choice, not the republics."

By M. Alimov.

ALMA-ATA

Sergey Duvanov, cochairman of the Social Democratic Party of Kazakhstan:

"The conservatism of the referendum is determined by its formulation. What is being offered is the apotheosis of sociological illiteracy. Basically, the question is being asked this way: "Either yes, or one of the two." The faulty formulation is obvious even to nonspecialists. In reality, there are three questions in one: 1) about the need for the Union as a federation, 2) about the need for the socialist choice, and 3) about the need for guarantees of the rights and freedoms of people of all nationalities.

It is clear that the first and second questions, because of their abstract nature, are overshadowed by the third, which is of most interest to the people. That is the question that will be answered. And since it is hard to find a citizen who would be against guaranteeing human rights and freedoms, one may be certain that the majority will say 'yes.'"

Imangali Tasmagambetov, first secretary of Kazakhstan Komsomol [All-Union Leninist Communist Youth Union] Central Committee:

"...I am certain that the majority of Kazakhstan citizens are for the Union."

OUR COMMENTARY

The reaction of the Union republics to the referendum proposed by the center turned out to be varied. Not surprisingly...

First, there is the disturbing virtuoso-twisted nature of the Moscow formulation, which proposes to answer with a single "yes" or "no" at least three different questions.

Second, the legal significance of the referendum results remains unclear. If a "yes" averaged across the country as a whole is interpreted as mandatory for the republics that said "no," the latter have a right to see the referendum at an encroachment on their constitutional right to self-determination. It so far has not been abolished.

Otherwise (as well as in the case that the majority of respondents say "no"), the referendum, in my opinion, will be turned into a run-of-the mill opinion poll (and an extremely badly designed one at that, from the sociological point of view). The republics already fear that the results of the referendum may be used for purposes far removed from the concepts of the law-based state that we are trying to build in our country.

The anxiety of the republics is understandable, but their attempts to stop the holding of the referendum are, in my view, illegal. Those who want to vote should be permitted to vote. On the other hand, any actions directed at forcing people to vote, whether they are housewives or military personnel, should also be regarded as illegal and be strictly punished.

By L. Nikitinskiy, KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA commentator on legal issues.

The upcoming referendum will be held in the entire Soviet Union.

In the future we will make an effort to present different points of view.

Forecasts in Kiev and Samara

PM0603164791 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 26 Feb 91 First Edition p 4

[Feature on run-up to referendum comprising reports by correspondent Colonel A. Polyakov in Kiev and correspondent Lieutenant Colonel O. Bedula in Samara under the general heading: "Referendum: Forecast of Results"]

[Text] As is well know, an all-Union referendum on preserving the USSR as a renewed federation of sovereign republics with equal rights is going to be held on 17 March. At the same time, attempts are being made in some republics to replace the formula of a nationwide vote or else simply block this process, conduct "separate" opinion polls, and so forth. So the situation in a number of areas is not developing in any one clear direction. What kind of referendum results are forecast? The editorial office has asked its permanent correspondents to find out people's opinion on this subject. Today we start publishing the material they have sent us.

Even "No" Has Conditions Attached

Before sending off this report to the editorial office I walked through the pedestrian subways of the Kreshchatik. I was quite surprised. In contrast to recent months, I did not meet a single person agitating against the Union Treaty. I could not even find anyone with a negative attitude to the approaching referendum. But "separatists" used to be very active here.

What has happened? Has the cold weather cooled their hot heads? I do not think so. The blame lies with the chill that has recently sprung up in relations between new parties and movements.

I will quote a few opinions in confirmation of this. Whereas I. Zayats, Ukrainian SSR [Soviet Socialist Republic] people's deputy and deputy chairman of Rukh, is still categorical:

"The referendum is needed by reactionary, chauvinist forces in order to ignore the will of the republics' peoples."

... V. Chervoniy, Ukrainian SSR people's deputy and chairman of the kray-level Rukh organization in Rovno, was forced to admit in an interview with the newspaper KIYEVSKIY VESTNIK that many radicals are leaving his organization and joining the interparty assembly and that events in the Baltic, the Transcaucasus, Moldova, and the Ukraine itself have encouraged them to take a more realistic, balanced standpoint.

This situation has not arisen simply because the radicals want to change their views. They have failed to make the people go on strike and are modestly keeping quiet about their failed ambitious plans to lead political life in the republic. That is why they are maneuvering in the run-up to the referendum rather than rushing in regardless. What else could they do? After all, as a rule, labor collectives and rural inhabitants are in favor of a united USSR. That cannot be ignored.

The Ukrainian Communist Party Central Committee has made its own attitude to the referendum clear: In a special appeal it urged Communists to vote for a renewed Union. Judging by responses in the press, this appeal is also finding support among ordinary people. Significant political forces act as a counterbalance to this, of course. Centrifugal trends are particularly strong in the west Ukraine. Only I do not think the "independents" will manage to make a very great impact on the referendum results.

To Whose Disadvantage Is This "Moderate Fervor"?

The situation in the oblast is now described by many as "moderate democratic fervor." There is no broad spectrum of opinions on the 17 March referendum. People in the Volga region incline towards an affirmative "yes" in questions put foward by the USSR Supreme Soviet. However, people are worried about something else: What kind of questions are they going to be asked in the Russian referendum? It has been announced, as is well known, by the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Supreme Soviet. An official communique appeared literally the other day, informing voters that they will have to answer the following questions:

"Do you feel it is necessary to preserve the RSFSR as a single, federative, multiethnic state within a renewed USSR?"

"Do you feel it is necessary to introduce the post of RSFSR president, to be elected in a nationwide vote?"

Democratic Russia activists held a rally in Samara recently, urging the population to throw away their USSR referendum papers or, at the very least, to "cross out both questions." But, typically, they advised people to support the questions in the Russian referendum without fail, regardless of what those questions might be. This kind of "pluralism" did not find support among people, however....

In any case, I think voters will make a sober choice in the referendum.

Constitution Committee on Referendum

LD0503143391 Moscow TASS in English 1417 GMT 5 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Veronika Romanenkova]

[Text] Moscow March 5 TASS—"Any acts, directly or indirectly preventing Soviet citizens from freely exercising their right to participate in a referendum, contradict the USSR Constitution," says a statement by the Constitution Compliance Committee.

The committee had a special session today in connection with the national parliament's proposal to consider the issue about the correspondence of decisions by some republican authorities concerning the March 17 nationwide referendum and the USSR Constitution, the committee's press service told TASS.

Cabinet, Unions on Compensation for Price Hikes

LD0603185891 Moscow TASS in English 1839 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow March 6 TASS—Members of the Soviet Cabinet of Ministers on Tuesday met leaders of the General Confederation of Soviet Trade Unions and territorial and branch trade union organisations.

The participants had an open, substantive and keen discussion of price reform and social protection of citizens.

They stressed the need to change retail prices as a step towards a regulated market and urged the parliament to adopt state laws on indexation, minimal consumer budget and minimal wages.

They expressed concern about decisions by local authorities that send retail prices soaring and demanded that effective measures be taken to stop this unlawful practice.

The participants agreed that a price reform must be coupled with compensations for a growing cost of living and a complex of other social security measures.

The meeting was chaired by Soviet Premier Valentin Pavlov. In his concluding remarks Pavlov spoke about the government's position on the issues discussed and expressed hope that such meetings will promote constructive cooperation between trade unions and the highest bodies of state administration.

Moscow Unions Demand Halt to Price Increases

LD0703122491 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1200 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] The Moscow Federation of Trade Unions is demanding that price increases be halted until the law on indexation is adopted, union Chairman Shmakov stated at the meeting between trade union leaders and Prime Minister Pavlov. Now the issue of whether or not to hold a general strike in the city is being decided at trade union meetings.

Western Views on Gorbachev Considered

LD0603153191 Moscow TASS in English 1508 GMT 6 Mar 91

[By TASS political news analyst Sergei Kolesnikov: "Gorbachev still a centralist"]

[Text] Moscow March 6 TASS—The world's press continues to discuss the results of President Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to Belorussia and his assessments of the political situation in the country.

The main conclusions are that, first, the Soviet president "brought clarity to the Soviet political debate and thus largely promoted its normalisation and even modernisation", as the French LIBERATION writes. Second, as the British newspaper THE INDEPENDENT notes, after Gorbachev's speeches in Belorussia, western observers concluded that Gorbachev had abandoned his centrist position and crossed to the camp of those who favour a tough course.

The assertion about a shift to the right has become commonplace in commentaries of western news organisations about the situation in the Soviet Union. The thorough analysis of the alignment of the political forces in the country that Gorbachev gave in his speeches in

Belorussia does not fit a rigid scheme into which they try to compress the multiformity of political life in the Soviet Union.

When it is said that Gorbachev has moved to the right, the decisive circumstance is usually lost sight of: The orientation of the former so-called "left" flank of the perestroika coalition has altered. Those who belonged to it yesterday now declare different goals from those they stated some 12-18 months ago.

As Eduard Shevardnadze put it aptly, "the democrats scattered", abandoning the frontline of reforms and thus enhancing the political groups which seek to preserve the old structure and cross out the past six years.

It is precisely this circumstance that objectively complicated the situation of the political centre, while simultaneously placing an emphasis on the need for accord, for overcoming the polarisation of forces that come out for the country's transition from totalitarianism to a humane and democratic society.

This is why the concept the president advanced in Belorussia—the concept of political centrism, the policy of wisdom, a balanced approach and consideration for all the interests objectively existing in society is the only way out of the present explosive situation.

There is certainly the need for the quest of a formula of civil accord that would overcome extremist approaches and express universal, democratic demands. But one thing is clear: this formula should help overcome the disastrous split of society into "right" and "left", "red" and "white".

Regarding the soviet president's stand, the New York Times recently suggested that Gorbachev's conservative and liberal critics in the west should learn several unpleasant truths about Soviet supporters of a tough course. It is precisely they and not Gorbachev who are the real adversary. They regard Gorbachev as their chief adversary in a much larger degree than Soviet reformers do. And it is supporters of a tough course and not reformers who are most likely to replace him.

Gorbachev, Deng Xiaoping Comparison Decried

91UN1005A Moscow RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA in Russian 2 Mar 91 p 3

[Article by Mikhail Botyan and Victor Ukolov: "The 'Inner Circle' Man"]

[Text] Vyacheslav Dashichev, a Moscow academic and specialist in international affairs, has been staying in Berlin by invitation since last October. He lectures students, and in his free time converses with journalists. It is difficult, of course, to feel the pulse of the country at such a distance, to be up-to-date on all that is going on, let alone to interpret it. This, however, does not deter the Soviet interviewee.

Dashichev chose MORGENPOST as a favorite vehicle for his revelations. The catchy headline under which an interview with him was published puzzled the Germans: "Will Gorbachev become a Deng Xiaoping?" He, who asked the question, answered it himself: It is possible that what is going on in the Soviet Union is a repetition of the Chinese version.

Then, however, our historian jumps to predictions: He says that a change of power is possible in the USSR if the opposition supports the young officer corps in the Army. A course toward a military takeover, then? That is some imagination!

To give weight to his fantasies, the learned gentleman—without false modesty and contrary to the truth—presents himself to the newspaper as..."Gorbachev's adviser."

One cannot help but recall a certain Gogol character who was a member of Pushkin's inner circle...

Official on Gorbachev's Difficulties

AU0503152691 Budapest NEPSZABADSAG in Hungarian 28 Feb 91 pp 1,6

[Interview with Roy Medvedev, member of the Supreme Soviet, by Laszlo Lengyel in Budapest; date not given—first paragraph is NEPSZABADSAG introduction]

[Excerpts] Roy Medvedev is a historian of international repute. During the recession, Medvedev was one of the most renowned members of the opposition, his works were only authorized in the West, and only a few copies of his books changed hands in the Soviet Union, in the form of samizdat publications. Medvedev was arrested several times, and went to prison. However, unlike his brother Zhores, Roy did not emigrate. He was one of the first adherents of perestroyka. Today, Roy Medvedev is a member of the Supreme Soviet. Following an invitation by the Hungarian Workers' Academy, he came to Hungary—for the first time in his life. [passage omitted]

[Lengyel] How would you explain the completely contradictory events in the Soviet Union during these last few months? Is Gorbachev still in control of events, or are they "controlling" him?

[Medvedev] Naturally, Gorbachev controls the most important events in the country. He will not let go of any power. He holds the power of the party and that of the state. The huge state apparatus has not collapsed. It is reflected in the Army and in the economic management system. As far as the economic management system is concerned, people are saying that it has collapsed, but in fact, it is working—the country would not exist otherwise.

Furthermore, Gorbachev is at the center of this huge country—which regroups dozens of federated and autonomous republics, and approximately 100 different peoples—and he cannot singlehandedly control all the events that are taking place. Sometimes, events take place unexpectedly or spontaneously. These developments should be studied, but there is no time for that. Gorbachev is waiting for an analysis or a detailed general survey, but he has not been given an adequate answer, so he has to bide his time.

Gorbachev's duties already go beyond the physical and intellectual capacities of a single human being. He has no think tank to whom he could delegate some of his functions. There might be a think tank on the way, in the form of the national security council. In the meantime, a lot of people are playing their own political games with Gorbachev. But the president has no advance knowledge of the moves that these people or forces will make. He is playing a simultaneous game of chess on a huge board with many different rivals, who all have their own style. [passage omitted]

[Lengyel] Recently, some conservative deputies wanted a "takeover" in the Soviet Union, and then Boris Yeltsin asked for Gorbachev's resignation. In the end, these events demonstrated Gorbachev's importance, his irreplaceability.

[Medvedev] I would not call the first group conservative—or, as they say in the Soviet Union, right-wingers. Voronin is an unknown man with a criminal past. He claims to unite 21 parties in his bloc, but I have never heard of any of these parties—nor have I heard of Voronin, for that matter. I only know that he is an engineer, that he was imprisoned for fraud, and that he was released three years ago. The members of his "parties" are psychopaths, political adventurers, and exhibitionists. They have neither chances, nor politicians, nor a program.

Yeltsin is a political figure. He has been joined by all those who see themselves as democrats or radicals, but there is no actual party force behind Yeltsin. They now want to create a strong national democratic party, in order to create some sort of a bipartite system. Travkin, Sobchak, and Gavriil Popov are all working toward this goal. But they all have their own ambitions, and they cannot come to an agreement. [passage omitted]

[Lengyel] One might say that a new form of cooperation is developing in that very exclusive international club called the "U.S.-Soviet club" (members only).

[Medvedev] Yes, but that was not a conscious decision taken by the United States or the Soviet Union. They just suddenly discovered that they would both benefit from a ceasing of confrontations and from the disappearance of the Cold War. The Soviet Union voted in favor of sanctions against Iraq, and this gave the United States the green light to make a global decision which would normally have been prevented by the Soviet Union in the past.

Since the cessation of confrontations, it has become possible for the United States to solve problems that are important to Washington in other areas of the world, problems that it could not have solved in the past. For its part, the Soviet Union no longer needs to fear the United States' endless attempts to interfere in Soviet domestic policy. [passage omitted]

Gorbachev, CPSU February Poll Ratings

91UN0999A Moscow RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA in Russian 2 Mar 91 p 1

[Article by Ye. Okhotnikov and V. Potapov, candidates of historical sciences: "Leader's Rating"]

[Text] **In February 1991 the Sociological Research Center of the CPSU Central Committee's Academy of Social Sciences summarized the results of an applied sociological study on the leadership in the party, conducted on an all-Union sample. Its authors, Candidates of Historical Sciences Ye. Okhotnikov and V. Potapov, report the following.**

According to the data of an all-Union survey conducted in February 1991, 45 percent of communists and one half of the party organization secretaries believe that to increase the CPSU's role in society and restore its authority, there is a need for party leaders who can successfully compete with the leaders of other political parties, associations, and movements, and be true representatives of the working people's interests.

They advocate promotion of the new type of leaders to key positions in all spheres of society's life—leaders who in their leadership activities are capable on relying not on "force" but on the principles of humanism, democracy, and socialist choice, and on their own talent and professionalism.

M.S. Gorbachev's rating has gone up considerably—by 20 percent—in comparison with last fall's results.

Control Commission Resolution on Party Discipline

PM0703104791 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 6 Mar 91 Second Edition p 1

["CPSU Central Control Commission Plenum Resolution 'On Discipline in the CPSU'"]

[Text] The CPSU Central Control Commission plenum notes that the steps taken by the CPSU Central Committee and party committees at the local level to implement the programmatic statement and the decisions and resolutions adopted by the 28th CPSU Congress have not brought about a fundamental breakthrough in the renewal of the party or increased its influence over sociopolitical processes.

Political and social tension are increasing within the country and the economic crisis is continuing to deepen. Anticommunist and other destructive forces are trying to eliminate the CPSU from the political arena, to remove the lawfully elected president from power, and to change the USSR's social system.

Party committees have not succeeded in making every Communist aware of the main aims of the 28th CPSU Congress. The quest for new forms of activity and political methods of work is proceeding slowly within the CPSU. The level of executive discipline has dropped in virtually all echelons of the party structure, resolutions adopted by leading party organs and the corresponding decisions are being carried out in an unsatisfactory manner, regular exchange of information between local party organs and the CPSU Central Committee has not been organized, attacks on the party have not been properly repulsed, and protection of Communists' honor and dignity has not been ensured.

The CPSU Central Control Commission plenum considers it inadmissible that strict compliance with the CPSU Statutes has not been the norm in the life of a number of party organizations. While exercising their autonomy and developing processes of the democratization of intraparty life, many primary party organizations are losing sight of the most important factor for the unity of party ranks: the strengthening of discipline and organization among Communists. It cannot be tolerated that grass-roots party structures in a number of places are being axed and the numerical strength of the CPSU reduced. Some party organizations have not held meetings for months, party members' activeness has dropped drastically, and many of them lack instructions. The responsibility of party members—particularly Communists in leadership positions—for the work assigned them has slackened.

The CPSU Central Control Commission plenum considers that the state of affairs which has taken shape within the party and the poor level of intraparty discipline are in many respects attributable to inadequate theoretical, ideological, political, and organizational work on the part of the CPSU Central Committee, its Politburo, and party committees and to systematic laggardness in political assessments and the formulation of proper measures and preventive actions to eliminate negative phenomena in the life of the party and society. Some Union republic communist parties have not been offered the requisite timely aid and support when they have found themselves in a difficult position. Inconsistent implementation of the political line and poor coordination in practical work between the Central Committee and Union republic communist parties and oblast, republic, and kray party organizations are having an adverse impact on the activity of primary party organizations and on Communists' morale and activeness. The party is unwarrantedly neglecting work with cadres.

The CPSU Central Committee has not always given a principled political assessment of Central Committee members whose actions discredit the party and push it toward a split and organizational disintegration.

The plenum tasks the CPSU Central Control Commission Presidium with taking specific steps to increase cooperation with party committees and control bodies at the local level and to form a system effectively to monitor implementation of the decisions of the 28th party congress, compliance with the demands of the CPSU Statutes, and the unity and cohesion of party ranks.

The CPSU Central Control Commission plenum urges all Communists and the country's citizens to take part in the upcoming referendum and endorse the preservation of the USSR as a renewed federation of equal sovereign republics in which the rights and freedoms of individuals of any nationality will be fully guaranteed.

The plenum urges support for the USSR president's efforts to stabilize the situation in the country and extricate it most speedily from the political and economic crisis, and it advocates enhancing the responsibility both of CPSU members who are leaders of the state apparatus and of management and national economic organs and of Communist deputies in soviets of all levels for the work assigned them and for the implementation of party policy.

At this difficult time for the country and the party, the CPSU Central Control Commission urges party organizations and all Communists not to lose the political initiative, to rally around the CPSU Central Committee on the basis of the decisions adopted by the 28th party congress, to strengthen its unity, to restore its authority, and to step up its influence on the stabilization of the economic and political situation.

Participants Listed

*PM0503122091 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian
5 Mar 91 Second Edition p 1*

[Unattributed report: "CPSU Central Control Commission Plenum"]

[Text] An enlarged plenum of the CPSU Central Control Commission was held 4 March. Taking part were first secretaries of Central Committees and chairman of control bodies of the union republic Communist Parties, secretaries of republic, kray, and oblast party committees, chiefs of CPSU Central Committee departments, representatives of party organizations and political organs of the USSR Armed Forces, scientists, and workers on central party newspapers and journals.

The plenum examined the question of the state of discipline in the CPSU. A report was delivered by Ye.N. Makhov, acting chairman of the CPSU Central Control Commission.

The following took part in the discussion of the report: N.Yu. Seleznev, secretary of the "Elektrokhimpribor" Combine party committee, Sverdlovsk; N.T. Knyazev, first secretary of Kustanay Kazakh Communist Party Obkom [oblast committee]; N.N. Korablev, chairman of the control and auditing commission of the Leningrad Oblast Party Organization of the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Communist Party; A.S.

Kolpikova, operator at the "Oktyabrneft" Administration in the Chechen-Ingush ASSR [Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic]; A.A. Ruzhitskiy, first secretary of Cherkassy Ukrainian Communist Party Obkom; A.F. Kolinichenko, first secretary of Orenburg RSFSR Communist Party Obkom; K.M. Kubilius, chairman of the Lithuanian Communist Party Central Control Commission; N.S. Stolyarov, chairman of the RSFSR Communist Party Central Control Commission; M.A. Chartayev, chairman of the Ordzhonikidze Kolkhoz in the Dagestan ASSR; A.P. Klaucens, secretary of the Latvian Communist Party Central Committee and first secretary of Riga Latvian Communist Party Gorkom [city committee]; P.M. Krasnov, commander of a motorized infantry regiment in the Belorussian Military District; A.S. Savkin, second secretary of Kaliningrad party obkom; S.G. Goibnazarova, chairman of Kuybyshevskiy raykom [rayon committee] of the trade union of agro-industrial association workers in Kurgan-Tyube Oblast, Tajik SSR [Soviet Socialist Republic]; G.D. Tabunshchik, chairman of the Moldova Communist Party Control and Auditing Commission; N.I. Kalinina, deputy chief of the Scientific Research Institute of Hygiene and Occupational Pathology, Volgograd; K.A. Velts, chairman of the Estonian Communist Party Central Committee Control and Auditing Commission; and S.M. Nesterenko, first secretary of the Turkmen Communist Party Central Committee.

The plenum was addressed by O.S. Shenin, Politburo member and secretary of the CPSU Central Committee.

The following took part in the plenum: CPSU Central Committee Politburo Members L.E. Annus, M.M. Burokevicius, A.M. Masaliyev, Yu.A. Prokofyev, and A.P. Rubiks; and CPSU Central Committee Secretaries V.A. Kuptsov and Yu.A. Manayenkov. The plenum adopted a resolution on the question discussed. Materials from the plenum will be published in the press.

Budget Reviewed

91UN0999B Moscow RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA in Russian 2 Mar 91 p 2

[Interview with G. Veselkov, deputy chairman of the CPSU Central Control Commission, by Sergey Samarin; place and date not given; published under the rubric "Party, Help Your 'Rank And File'": "How Much Money Does the CPSU Have?"]

[Text]*The mail of our new rubric "Party, Help Your 'Rank And File'" contains many questions about the CPSU's financial situation. We asked G. Veselkov, deputy chairman of the CPSU Central Control Commission, to answer some of these questions.*

[Samarin] Gennadiy Gavrilovich, there is much talk now about the increased independence of the party organizations in making financial decisions and their transition to self-financing. What is happening in practice?

[Veselkov] This is a difficult and painful process. And its cause, in my opinion, lies not in that the CPSU Central Committee or the republics' Central Committees still hold onto all the financial levers, tying up the initiative of local party organizations, as some believe. The problem is much more complex.

Independence does not mean only the opportunity to use money at their own discretion, without supervision from above. The problem is to finance these expenses with their own income. However, we are observing a completely different picture. Almost all party organizations operate on the same principle: "You give us the money, but do not interfere in how we spend it." This is a dependency attitude.

[Samarin] What are the results?

[Veselkov] I would call the budget of the Union republic Communist Parties, recently approved by the joint plenum of the CPSU Central Committee and the Central Control Commission, an extraordinary one. For the first time in the last 20 years it has an enormous built-in deficit—1,600 million rubles [R], which is more than a half of the entire budget. One quarter of the party's insurance fund, accumulated over many years, will have to be used up to cover this deficit. It is hard not to see that the issue of finance is growing into a purely political one. Let us be frank: The future of our party is at stake.

[Samarin] So where does the solution lie?

[Veselkov] Many party organizations today live beyond their means. It is enough to say that on the whole only a little more than 48 percent of the Union republic Communist Parties' expenditures are provided for by their own income. They, as well as republic, kray, and oblast organizations of the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Communist Party—with the exception of the Moscow city organization—will receive subsidies. We are seriously concerned about the extent of this. For instance, the Communist Parties of Kirghizia, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan, and four republic, two kray, and six oblast party organizations in Russia will need subsidies to cover 70 to 80 percent of their expenses.

I think that this situation can hardly be called normal. This means that we need to first activate all methods of searching for new sources of income, and second, establish a strict economy regime. The main approach here is widespread use of volunteers in party work. It is possible that in some instances we will have to make changes in the structure of party organs. And, of course, we need to more speedily develop the production and economic activities of the party organization in order to produce additional income. I cannot help but mention that the CPSU Central Committee Administration of Affairs has not yet become truly involved in this work.

In our opinion the budget stipulates a very insubstantial income from production-economic activities—R32.8 million. Of course, it is an increase in comparison with last year, but it is obviously inadequate if we take into account, as I said, a 1 billion ruble subsidy.

[Samarin] This is a good time to ask about the CPSU ranks' compliance with the party rules demand that each communist pay monthly membership dues, which are to be fully and promptly transferred to party committee accounts.

[Veselkov] At this time over 1.3 million communists do not pay their party dues. The sum total of delinquencies as of 1 January was over R5.5 million.

You would agree that disregard of the duty stipulated in the rules to support the party financially is an alarming symptom. Of course, it is primarily the party organizations themselves that should bring things to order. But I think there will be a frank discussion of this topic at the CPSU Central Control Commission plenum which will take place at the beginning of March. The main topic will be the strengthening of party discipline.

[Samarin] RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA readers responded with great interest to the publication in our newspaper of the letter from L. Zaporozhets, CPSU member since 1943, "Party, Help Your 'Rank And File...'" Opinions on this letter differ dramatically; some are diametrically opposite. There is a real discussion going on. But it appears that the majority is for the party—even in its current difficult financial straits—to continue to find opportunities to help low-income people, veterans, and disabled people. What is your opinion, Gennadiy Gavrilovich?

[Veselkov] Well, this is a topic for discussion, and a serious one. I would rather not dot all the "i"s yet. That is what discussions are for: to collectively find an optimum solution, taking into account all the pros and cons. One clarification is in order, though. When we say "Do!" we should not stop at exclamations. Exclamations are convincing only when they are preceded by a search for answers to the questions of how, and at the expense of what? Let us think together, search for different options. It is true that not only is each communist responsible for the party but the party is also responsible for each. And the communists naturally do not have a right to withdraw support from their party comrades who are in need or have had some calamity befall them.

By the way, the current political situation makes the RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA discussion especially relevant. Here, for instance, I have the resolution of the Moldova Communist Party conference. This document says that the situation is such that the right of a person to be a communist is often trampled on, in violation of existing laws. Communists are frequently persecuted for their ideological beliefs, relieved of their posts for no other reason, and face obstacles to their attempts to find jobs. Because of that, some of them are already suffering serious financial difficulties and everyday discomfort. The harsh reality demands that we revive party camaraderie on the new basis and take steps to guarantee the dignity and provide moral and material protection of communists, first of all CPSU veterans, war and labor veterans, the disabled, young communists, and others who need party support.

That is why the conference decided to create a Social Support Fund for republic communists. The Communist Party Central Committee has been instructed to create an organizational committee for the fund in one month, and to work out and have approved the fund's statutes. The fund will be supported by voluntary contributions, both collective and individual, from communists and other citizens of the republic, whose cooperation will help to form a reliable system of social protection for those in need. It is recommended that the party committees and the primary party organizations support any valuable initiatives and actions directed at improving production and economic activities and ensuring the fund's security.

There are other examples in other regions that deserve attention. I would like to believe that the RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA discussion will help to spread these grassroots experiences in the social protection of communists.

CPSU Members Polled on State of Party

91UN0970A Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 26 Feb 91 Second Edition p 3

[Summary of poll of CPSU members and former members followed by a commentary by the PRAVDA Party Life Department: "'It Is Morally Difficult for Communists at Present'"]

[Text]**"It is morally difficult for communists at present," say participants in a sociological poll. But when was it ever easy for genuine party members?**

In January-February of this year the Center for Sociological Research of the Academy of Social Sciences, under the leadership of Zh. Toshchenko and Ye. Okhotskiy, conducted a poll of CPSU members in eight Union republics. The research encompassed 10 regions of the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic], three regions of the Ukrainian SSR [Soviet Socialist Republic], Belorussia, Kazakhstan, Moldavia, Estonia, Azerbaijan, and Tajikistan.

Some 1,600 communists representing the entire Union were polled. Of them, 28 percent were workers, 8 percent were peasants, 29 percent were engineering and technical workers, and 14 percent were scientific, cultural, and educational workers. The participants in the poll also included 910 secretaries of party organizations and 892 people who have left the CPSU. The sociologists also analyzed the circumstances under which 1,821 former members of the CPSU left the party. Acting as experts of a sort were 129 heads of organizational departments of obkoms [oblast party committees], kraykoms [kray party committees], and Central Committees of Communist Parties of Union republics.

The scholars were interested in how various groups of party members view the situation in the CPSU, who is leaving its ranks, and why. Here is some data received as a result of the poll.

Of those communists polled, 74 percent declared their full intention to remain in the CPSU (in November of last year it was 66 percent).

And 63 percent are convinced that the CPSU is able lead to society out of the crisis, but only 38 percent adhere to this opinion without reservation. In short, the specialists believe that certain positive improvements in the mood of communists have begun to show. This also manifests itself in the fact that the majority of participants in the poll occupy a basically united position in regard to a series of the most important issues. For example, 80 percent are in favor of the need to preserve the USSR in its existing borders, 76 percent support a variety of forms of property ownership and their equal development, and 65 percent are in favor of the development of a multiparty system in the country.

It is characteristic that 83 percent noted the need to reinforce party discipline. True, this number also includes many of those who are in favor of the former methods of control "from above." But there is also an increasing understanding of the need to move to modern, democratic forms.

The following data are also worth noting: Of the communists, 68 percent believe the existence of various currents and platforms in the party to be unavoidable. However, far from all are convinced of the usefulness of this phenomenon, and 30 percent view it as harmful. Nonetheless, it is possible to come to the conclusion that the existence of different points of view within the framework of the socialist ideology predominates among members of the party.

What negative trends in the restructuring of the CPSU did the poll's participants note?

Some 60 percent of rank-and-file communists and 70 percent of the party aktiv are convinced that even now there are many uncommitted people in the CPSU.

There remains a fairly steady number of people who intend to leave the party—12 percent (for comparison: In November 1990 it was 13, and as a whole for 1990 it was 12 percent). But the number of those who are wavering has dropped from 20 percent in November of last year to 14 percent.

As previously, the majority of communists feel themselves alienated from the adoption of those decisions that are the most important for the party, and they note that the slogan about the power of the party masses is not reinforced with a mechanism to ensure that CPSU members may express their will. About a third of those polled have a fairly pessimistic view of the constructive opportunities of the CPSU, and 29 percent feel psychological discomfort, inasmuch as the people in a number of labor collectives are ill-disposed toward communists and "pressure" them. This undoubtedly also has an effect on the continuing decline in the efficacy of the work of the primary party organizations that was pointed out by three-fourths of the secretaries polled.

The views of the poll participants were quite contradictory concerning the urgent problems troubling all of our society.

For example, 46 percent supported private ownership of land, and almost the same number rejected it.

In regard to the January events in the Baltic region, 35 percent consider them the result of an incorrect policy by the center, 33 percent—unconstitutional actions by the local authorities, and 30 percent viewed them as a provocation.

Of those members of the CPSU polled, 40 percent favored the party's transformation into a union of completely independent communist parties of the republics, and 39 percent expressed their opposition to such a "restructuring."

And, finally, the sociological "portrait" of those who have left the CPSU. Of the grand total of those who have left the party, 35 percent left in 1989 while 74 percent left in 1990. The average age of the majority is 30-50 years, and their length of membership in the party is more than 10 years. They are mostly workers at industrial enterprises. The number of those leaving the party for political reasons has increased: because of lack of faith in the CPSU as a leading force in society (26 percent), the absence of any real benefit from their participation in party work (26 percent), and an unwillingness to remain in the same ranks with unworthy people (25). Other reasons were also given: Disagreement with the policy of perestroyka (17 percent), loss of faith in socialism (14), and an unwillingness to answer for the mistakes of the past (13).

Many communists, according to the data of the research, are sharply affected by the ideological dissociation of the party ranks (36 percent). And a significant number of CPSU members (18 percent) effectively do not understand the theoretical differences between the different ideological trends in the party.

Commentary by the PRAVDA Party Life Department

We could back up the data of the sociologists with examples from the mail to the editorial board. The readers of the newspaper also express a very substantial and, to be frank, alarming difference of opinion concerning important problems in the life of society. And often there is intolerance for those who think differently, bias against other points of view, and a desire for clarity and solidity, which is completely natural under conditions of the variety of views and prescriptions for "saving the country" which appear on the pages of a multifaceted press.

But let us return to the results of the sociological poll. Of course we should be glad that positive changes have been noted in interparty relations and that the majority of CPSU members remain faithful to its ideals and its noble goals. How important it is to reinforce the positive tendencies! And to reinforce them first and foremost with active work in the primary party organizations and their influence on the situation in their labor collectives. Unfortunately, it is just these organizations which still will not be able to find optimal forms and methods of work under the new conditions and which have sharply reduced their activity. The 28th congress gave them more rights. But for the time being these rights remain untouched in many of the primary links of the party. After all, only the communists themselves, by their effective actions, can win the respect of their comrades at the workplace. They cannot stand aloof from a single problem if it troubles the people.

Many raykoms [rayon party committees] and gorkoms [city party committees] have clearly lost their way. Endless reorganizations of the apparat, renamings of departments and other structures, and shuffling of personnel takes up the lion's share of the time and forces of the party aktiv. They simply have no time left for going to the labor collectives and meeting the communists. So many words have been said about the need to begin work where the people live, but in essence this has never happened and is not taking place now. The political opponents of the CPSU have launched, for example, a fierce campaign against the Union referendum planned for 17 March, but several party committees are still discussing how to begin a campaign of their own.

In a number of places mutual relations between the party committees and the soviets are not in place. One side still has not overcome its shock from the loss of its past absolute power, and the other, as in the days of the pre-election campaign and rallies, is ascribing its inability to set things right to the errors of the previous power structures.

At one time V.I. Lenin wrote with anger about the incompetence of many communist leaders and about how important it is to enlist specialists who know their business into administration. It seems that in our current soviets the approach is the direct opposite: There they go to any length to ensure that the administration is filled with their own people—"democrats"—no matter how incompetent they may be, while communists are pushed into the background.

The majority of the poll's participants believe that the most important condition for getting the party out of its crisis and strengthening its influence among the masses is a clear political line from the CPSU Central Committee. One cannot help but agree with this. The communists are not awaiting instructions and orders from above but rather clear political views and reference points. For example, many of those polled by the sociologists do not understand how it is possible to reconcile socialist choice and a communist perspective as proclaimed in the program documents of the party with recognition of private property, especially of land. This needs to be addressed—by scholars and the ideologists of the CPSU.

One also cannot help but mention the fact that many party organizations have not begun studying the materials of the congress and the rulings of recent CPSU Central Committee plenums as they should, and communists, particularly in their letters to the editorial office, often ask questions which were addressed, although possibly not exhaustively, in the course of discussions at the congress.

One of the causes for a decline in the authority of the party, as the research of the sociologists has shown, is a shortage of quality leaders. Especially against the background of the advancement in the soviets and in a number of social movements and associations of new, unconventional figures who know how to gain popularity. Meanwhile, many first secretaries of party committees have recently left to work in the soviets, and they are not always replaced with men of equal quality. This means that the party organizations must search for genuine leaders who are able to master the new requirements. It is only with the greatest difficulty that we are overcoming the legacy of an authoritative-bureaucratic system that is self-reproducing and relegates obedient mediocrities to leading posts! We, the journalists, are undoubtedly guilty of that as well.

However the root of evil lies not so much with the journalists, who are routinely blamed in many of the speeches at assemblies and plenums, as in an entrenched unwillingness on the part of some party committees to accept criticism in the press. Some of the leading party workers are convinced that, given the atmosphere of attacks on the party, the party press should not be speaking about their faults and errors—they say this harms the prestige of the CPSU. It is the same old song in a new setting. It is as though flaws have quit being flaws, as though it is not "gentlemanly" to notice them. Before we were worried about what people abroad would think. Now we must not provide food for criticism to the opposition publications... We agree: One should not provide food to opponents, and this rule should apply most of all to those who try to paint over their mistakes instead of repudiating them.

"It is morally difficult for communists at present," note the authors of the sociological investigation. Yes, that is true. But when was it ever easy for genuine party members? Their strength is in the aggressiveness of their position, in the unity of their actions, and in party comradeship. It is in their skill at conducting work in the multiparty soviets, the trade unions, and among the masses, which are dissatisfied and frequently led astray, and at going to the most varied audiences, convincing people, and providing an example of service in the interests of the workers.

It is not that the party alone has such a great need to overcome the present crisis and come through these difficult experiences with honor. It is society, enduring these difficult times, that needs it. After all, the fate of the CPSU—whatever enemies may say and write about it—is inseparable from the fate of the people.

Kuptsov on Political Pluralism

91UN0982A Moscow SELSKAYA ZHIZN in Russian 28 Feb 91 p 3

[V. Raskin report on news conference given by CPSU Central Committee Secretary V.A. Kuptsov on 27 February: "Political Pluralism—In the CPSU Central Committee Press Center"]

[Text] You utter the word "Unity!" and it elicits nothing but emotions. But just say "Consensus." It sounds strange somehow, does it not? It sounds new. How much fervor we see today around this consensus! There is discussion in the parliaments and at various rallies and conferences. Truly, we need very much to reach unity and accord on a great many problems. But, alas, it is not all that simple.

First of all the numerous social movements will have to have their say. CPSU Central Committee Secretary V.A. Kuptsov, head of the department on ties with social and political organizations, spoke to journalists yesterday at a news conference in the Oktyabrskaya Hotel. The subject to be discussed appeared thus—"the CPSU seeking dialogue and cooperation with new political forces."

"The Communist Party reaffirms the approach to political pluralism as an important factor of democracy," Valentin Aleksandrovich Kuptsov stated in response to journalists' questions. "At the same time, we are forced to resolutely defend ourselves from the actions of destructive political forces. What features are characteristic of these today? Anticommunism, discreditation of October and the socialist system, a striving to effect collapse of the Union, and extremism in the struggle for power. On what platform are we prepared to consolidate? The CPSU advocates democratic renewal, social stabilization, law and order, and universal ethnic accord."

Words characterizing one party or another were spoken fairly frequently at the news conference—left, right, centrist; labels heard—democratic, conservative, liberal. And how many are there in all? The following figures were cited—about 20 parties on the all-Union level, around 500 organizations and parties on the republic level, and around 10,000 diverse political clubs and citizens' associations. How many there are in actuality no one can say exactly. This will be shown through the registration of political parties, social movements, and associations. The USSR Justice Ministry began this effort 1 January. As of today, not a single party has registered.

The CPSU Central Committee secretary indicated in his responses that over 100,000 individuals have recently joined the ranks of the Communist Party. This is more than the membership of all other political parties combined. Valentin Aleksandrovich then referred to his recent trip to Krasnoyarsk Kray. From his numerous discussions in party committees at enterprises and labor collectives, he learned that many people who had just yesterday left the ranks of the CPSU have now returned to the party. This is taking place because communists have stopped "sitting it out in the trenches." Many people are looking to them for specific proposals in resolving the country's most important problems.

Pugo Cites Figures on Increased Crime

91P50103A Moscow TRUD in Russian 21 Feb 91 p 1

[Unattributed report:"Theft, Corruption, Speculation"]

[Text] Colonel-general Boris Pugo, USSR minister of internal affairs, spoke at a briefing at the MVD Press Center. "Last year," he said, "the overall range of crimes reached the maximum level for the postwar period. Aggression and possession of weapons among criminal elements is growing. Criminal terrorism and abduction of persons for the purpose of ransom or blackmail is spreading. The possession of weapons by the populace remains the most critical crime factor. The corresponding Presidential Decree has not been carried out satisfactorily to date. In the country as a whole, fewer than 30,000 guns have been confiscated and surrendered."

"Evidently", continued B. Pugo, "we need to create union organs to combat the most dangerous crimes having an inter-republic, All-Union and interethnic character."

Commenting on the activities of law enforcement organs in the struggle against economic crime, the USSR Minister of Internal Affairs, according to the POST-FAKTUM agency, stated the following: "Stabilizing the situation in the country depends, to a considerable degree, on the effective struggle against crime in the economic sphere. Graft, thefts, corruption and speculation are rapidly growing in all areas of the economy. There is a growing wave of daring crimes related to currency and securities, bank operations, illegal credit, the creation of bogus joint-stock companies and cooperatives, and fraud on an international scale.. In a year's time, 265,000 economic crimes have been exposed. About 10,000 of these are thefts on a large or particularly large scale. MVD organs have turned out to be unprepared, in many respects, for the fundamental changes in the nature of economic crime. There is no law on the struggle against corruption, and this hampers our work substantially. We have succeeded, to a certain degree, in creating a basis for operational monitoring of criminal group leaders and their spheres of influence. But, for now, the turning point does not exist. The deep layers of organized crime still remain undisturbed. The Presidential Decrees of 22 and 26 January of this year gave us new opportunities in combatting the shadow economy and organized economic crime. Special all-Union programs are currently being developed to combat theft, corruption, and speculation."

KGB Spokesman on Draft Security Law

LD0603185191 Moscow Domestic Service in English 1210 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] As we have already mentioned the USSR Supreme Soviet considered on Tuesday [5 March] the draft laws on the state security bodies. Our special correspondent Vadim Solovyev met with the spokesman for the KGB, Major General Aleksandr Karbainov, and asked him about the new law on state security bodies:

[Karbainov in Russian, fading into English translation] This is a new law—there have never been any laws on the state security bodies in the history of the Soviet state. Regrettably, the state security bodies are acting on the basis of sub-laws—for example, on the basis of the regulations adopted by the Soviet Council of ministers in 1959. For a long time the KGB used to be a closed body surrounded by a screen of mystery and secrecy.

Today it's quite different. The KGB sees its role in the system of the socialist law-based state and in the fact that it should defend the interests of the people and each individual. This is in line with the interests of perestroyka where the individual is the main consideration. Its concrete tasks are to a great extent the same as those tackled by all the special services in the world, including intelligence, counter-intelligence, border security, ensuring the secrecy of the government communications and other areas. Now there have been added the new functions—the defense of the constitutional system, fighting organized crime and also economic sabotage.

During the building of the law-based state on state security bodies is a very important measure. The law puts into effect such principles of the law-based state as the supremacy of law with everybody being governed by it, and the indivisibility of the freedom of the individual, his or her rights and legitimate interests, and also the control over the realization of the law.

The law for the first time contains a provision on openness in the activities of the KGB'S bodies. We believe that our task today is not only to correct false beliefs about the KGB, but to explain its functions. The truth should open the eyes of the people on today's tasks and methods used by the KGB. That's why openness is our main lever for strengthening trust within various strata of Soviet society and amongst the countries of the world community.

The law specifies the duties and rights of the KGB—it will be published and the people, based on their experience, may compare what the state security bodies are doing in reality and what they should do to comply with the law. Thus we expand the possibilities of the broad public control so that the people can apply to legal and other bodies when they feel that their rights are interfered with by the state security bodies.

There's a special provision in the law which envisages public control and in parallel the control from the state and the finance bodies as well as the procuratorial supervision.

Easter Celebrations Planned in Moscow

LD0603232191 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 2100 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] For the first time in 70 years Easter will be officially celebrated in Moscow. This has been reported by the Novosti agency. Easter week will start in Moscow on 6 April with a festive divine service on Red Square and will end with a prayer for peace and thanksgiving to the Lord.

Taking part in the festivities will be 10,000 orphans and disabled children and adults. A joint Soviet-U.S. conference for charity cooperation is sponsoring these events.

Economic

Coal Miners' Strikes Spread Across Nation

LD0603190791 Moscow TASS in English 1758 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow March 6 TASS—Coal miners have been on and off strike across the Soviet Union this week, causing anxiety to the government and coal consumers.

TASS correspondent Viktor Makarov reports from Vorkuta, North Russia that the decision to begin industrial action at midnight has been reached at a conference of representatives of work collectives, the Vorkutaugol Association administrations and trade union association.

Coal miners in the Pechora coal field have formulated their economic demands to the country's government. These include better pay, better pensions and lower taxes.

Workers' committee members and trade unionists in Vorkuta and Inta demand direct talks between miners and Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov—their only condition for averting the stoppage.

Deputy Prime Minister Lev Riabiev on Tuesday sent a telegram to Vorkuta to say he is ready to receive miners' representatives. However, Vorkuta miners believe that only the cabinet leader or the president are authorized to solve the problems they have raised. They say Pavlov's interview televised on Tuesday is "a tough refusal to sit down at the negotiating table" with miners.

Miners' trade union leader V. Gobrusev told TASS Pechora miners had no more patience with this kind of living, with even the bare essentials in short supply, spiralling prices and taxes.

On Wednesday, all mines in Vorkuta worked at a normal pace. More fuel than planned has been mined here since the beginning of this year and since the beginning of March. Delivery terms are a problem because of the shortage of railway carriages.

UKRINFORM-TASS correspondents Nikolai Stolyarov and Sergei Savchenko report from Donetsk that work has fully or partially stopped at coal mining enterprises in the region. The situation changes from shift to shift. A total of 14 out of 200 mines are now on strike. They have failed to supply nearly 200,000 tonnes of fuel coal to metallurgical and coke-and-chemical plants in the region, leaving them in a tight spot.

Donetsk Strike Leader Reacts to Pavlov Speech

LD0603183191 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1500 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Interview with Donetsk strike committee member Andrey Yurevich Vnukov by correspondent Gennadiy Kondaurov in Donbass and an unidentifed announcer in Moscow—live]

[Text] [Announcer] Now, on the line should be our Donbass correspondent Gennadiy Kondaurov. If he is ready to work, we will listen to him. Good evening.

[Kondaurov] Hello. We are talking about the situation now in the Donbass mines. Yesterday's televised speech by Prime Minister Pavlov has not halted the strike in the Donbass. New mines have joined those which have been on strike throughout this week. According to official information from the controller, the amount of coal extracted during the last 24 hours has dropped very sharply. Because of the strikes, and probably also due to other reasons, 67,000 tons of coal have not been extracted. In the days prior to this, the shortfall was considerably less. With me is a member of the Donetsk strike committee, a worker from the sixth face of the Abakumov mine, Andrey Yurevich Vnukov. According to your information, the strike committee information, how many mines are on strike today?

[Vnukov] In the Donbass today, there are 20 mines on strike, and 10 mines have halted unloading.

[Kondaurov] This is significantly more than yesterday. Tell me, what, however, are the demands put forth by the miners?

[Vnukov] The miners are putting forth demands taken from the protocol which was signed by the government and the strike committees. That is Article 10, concerning the pension which has still not been set in motion, and Article 33, which is about wages, an increase in wages. The government has still not submitted any proposals of its own. The government is effectively refusing to hold talks.

[Kandaurov] So, you consider that Decree No. 68 which was mentioned in yesterday's speech by the prime minister, is not being implemented, in particular regarding increasing wages?

[Vnukov] Of course.

[Kandaurov] These are not new demands which are being put forward, but additions, or rather the development of that decree?

[Vnukov] Of course, there are practically no new demands in this. These are two points which are clearly laid out in Decree No. 68.

[Kandaurov] Tell me, how has yesterday's speech by the prime minister been received in the mines and the strike committees?

[Vnukov] Well, the prime minister did not convince the working men with what he said in his speech. In particular, he asked where the money could come from, who could provide it. A lot of money is wasted here, for example, on the huge increase in defenses when I do not understand who we are now defending ourselves from. Is everyone afraid, so to speak, that we will eat them because we are starving?

[Announcer] Gennadiy, I do not even know whether to put this question to you or to Andrey Yurevich, but what effect is the strike having on those closely related to you, on workers in metallurgy and the chemical industry, and naturally, on a purely human level, is the strike being supported or condemned? Two questions. I would ask you to reply.

[Kandaurov] I would like to give you one example. I had a phone call today from the director of the Azovstal metallurgical combine Aleksandr Alekseyevich Bulyandov, a people's deputy of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet, and he said, simply, with great grief and in tears, that the coke heaters of this metallurgical combine could stop working tomorrow because there is no coal. Prior to this, metallurgical combines were poorly supplied with coal even before this, but now the situation is very serious indeed. The fact is that this could have an effect on the production of metal and this very metallurgial combine, Azovstal, is the one which provides half a million pit-props without which the mines cannot work, so if this chain continues and stops production there, then when the miners stop striking, they will also be unable to work. Generally speaking, those in the metallurgical industry consider that the demands of the miners for an increase in their wages in the face of the rise in prices, and of the cost of living as a whole are justified and the metallurgists would like their wages to be increased, too. But the situation is such that the strike here could stop the work at the metallurgical factories and this arouses considerable alarm among them. In connection with this, I would ask Andrey Yurevich to reply to this question. Is any compromise possible, after all, and could it calm this strike which cannot be stopped?

[Vnukov] There would be no question of compromise for strikes if the government would go for some sort of talks, if it would take some steps to meet us. There has been nothing from their side, not even a proposal.

[Announcer] But would it be possible to find a compromise now? Is it possible for there to be a compromise between the strikers and the government?

[Vnukov] If course it is possible, if the government will hold talks and if there will be some sort of hope of talks, there is always hope.

[Kandaurov] I would like to conclude by saying that talks are really necessary. It is not right to ignore a strike. It has already been going on for a long time. Today, the main Ukrainian mines are on their sixth day of the strike. Talks are necessary. It is essential to sit down at the negotiating table and look for a compromise and a way of halting this strike there.

[Announcer] I am in complete agreement with you. Thank you for the detailed information. All we can do now is wait for events to develop.

Strike Includes Economic, Political Demands

LD0703094191 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 0700 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] Our correspondent reports from Syktyvkar: as from midnight last night, work on extracting and unloading coal came to a complete halt in five mines in Vorkuta, the Komsomolskaya, Oktyabrskaya, Tsentralnaya, Promyshlennaya, and Yuzhnaya. Five mines are working according to their previous regime, including the major one in the field, the Vorgashorskaya. The remaining three mines in the polar region are partially functioning. In the neighboring mining town of Inta, work has partially come to a halt in two of the five mines, the Intinskaya and Kapitalnaya. The others are producing coal as before.

Before the night shift, a report reached all the mines of the Pechora coal field that late that evening, a telephone conversation had taken place between Cabinet of Ministers Chairman Pavlov and Khudyayev, the chairman of the Komi republic's Council of Ministers. An agreement was eventually reached regarding talks; that is to say, what the Komi republic's miners were asking the Union government a week ago.

The strike by the miners of Vorkuta and Inta has been going on for 24 hours. The basic demands of the men from Vorkuta are economic ones: They want their wages increased 2.5 times. The men of Inta, along with this, also have political demands. They are now demanding the resignation of the USSR president and the country's Cabinet of Ministers and the dissolution of the USSR Supreme Soviet.

Coal Industry Deputy Interviewed on Strikes

914F0155A Moscow RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA in Russian 5 Mar 91 p 1

[Interview with Aleksandr Fisun, USSR deputy minister of coal industry, by RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA correspondent Aleksandr Krotkov; place and date not given: "The Miners' Strike: In Rumors and From an Authority"]

[Text]**The fact that the miners' strike on 1 March had not turned into a mass event was presented by the anticommunist press as evidence of a crisis in the labor movement. Is that the case? What lessons should we learn from yet another strike wave? These are the questions our correspondent brought to Aleksandr Fisun, USSR deputy minister of coal industry.**

"First of all," said Aleksandr Petrovich, "I would like to give updated figures on the number of strikers, since all kinds of contradictory figures are 'showing up' in the newspapers today.

"On 1 March, out of 594 mines in our country less than thirty went on strike. In the Ukraine, 11 out of 248 mines were on strike; in Karaganda, 16 out of 26; in Rostov, only one mine stopped work; in Vorkuta, only one shift at Oktyabrskaya mine; and, finally, in Kuzbass there were no strikes at all.

"I believe it is not right to talk about the strike's success or failure, since the strikers pursued different goals in different regions of the country.

"In Karaganda the demands were mostly of political nature. The Donbass miners' main demand, however, was a two to two and a half times increase in salaries—a demand that is impossible to satisfy under current conditions of budget deficit. To implement it across the entire country we would need about 15 billion rubles. Who should this money be taken from? The pensioners? Students? Doctors? Teachers? This cannot be done. The majority of Ukrainian miners understood that. And I would not dare to call the decision of miners' collectives not to strike evidence of a crisis. Also, do not forget that their wages will go up 24 percent. How can it be called a defeat? A compromise—yes! But not a capitulation.

"Those who keep talking about the miners' defeat want, in my opinion, to bait the miners, to provoke them into a prolonged strike, into a war 'to the last soldier,' which may result in the deepest energy crisis in the country, an increase of political instability, and a decline in the living standard.

"In one Friday alone, as a result of the strike, 133,540 tons of coal had not been shipped. The decline in coke production amounted to 50,000 tons. Meanwhile, serious complaints addressed at the miners are coming from every part of the country. Power industry workers in the Far East demand the coal immediately: They work directly from the deliveries, and even a one-day interruption in power supply may result, among other things, in flooding of local mines.

"Delivery interruptions may result in destruction of coke batteries at the metal works in the southern Ukraine. As a result, coal industry enterprises will get less metal, and the miners will get less equipment. Whom will they blame then?

"Judge for yourself: Is it a success or is it a defeat—being able to avoid this course of events this time?"

AS WE WENT TO PRINT: As it became known, yesterday, 4 March, some brigades and teams at several mines in Krasnoarmeyskugol and Pervomayskugol complexes went on strike again. The "destructive" relay baton had been picked up by Kuzbass. Out of more than a hundred of its coal enterprises only three stopped their work. It appears that a quite significant factor in this was the visit of Minister of Coal Industry M. Shchadov, who reminded the miners that 2,716 million rubles had been allocated to Kuzbass in this year's budget—almost three times as much as in any previous year. The miners also received a million dollars for food purchases, and the tariffs for fuels delivered over the plan had been increased.

The Canards Are Flying

The Voice of America, quoting materials of the independent bulletin EXPRESS-CHRONIKA, said that on 1 March, 30 mines were on strike in Ukraine alone.

Deputy Prime Minister Interviewed on Prices

LD0603055991

[Editorial Report] Moscow Central Television First Program network in Russian at 1848 GMT on 5 March carries a 15-minute interview with Viktor Ivanovich Shcherbakov, new deputy prime minister of the USSR, on what is happening to prices. The recorded interview is conducted by an unidentified reporter. The place and date of the interview are not given.

Shcherbakov says that the government and president have not yet adopted any decisions on prices. Therefore, prices in Leningrad and Moscow have basically been introduced by the local authorities, for instance, the Moscow executive committee. There are serious reasons for the price rises, and amateurism is one. He recalls that in September the government made a decision on raising wholesale prices, to be introduced on 1 January, which the Russian parliament accelerated, introducing them in the autumn. The application of a different theory by the Russian parliament deflected the measure. At present there are union prices, local authorized prices, and free prices, causing confusion. Shcherbakov gives various examples of different local prices and cases of local authorities increasing state prices.

Noting that the Moscow Soviet has followed its own price policy, creating various prices for the same item, which has created good opportunities for speculators, Shcherbakov says that the fault for price chaos lies with local authorities. The Moscow Soviet has allowed shops to buy items at contract prices, which people have then exploited for their own gains.

Shcherbakov accuses the past and present government of not liberalizing prices, saying that the central government is not going for such a liberalization of prices as the Moscow Soviet. The government is working out maximum prices for individual items. Money gained from these will be given back to the public as compensation.

The interviewer jokingly asks if the so-called presidential tax goes straight into the president's pockets. Shcherbakov takes this well, calling it a sales tax that has been set up by the Supreme Soviet. He says the turnover tax existing at the moment has become outmoded and irrational. Value added tax is needed instead. This is a civilized tax, he notes.

The interviewer asks about rumors that 5 percent tax is taken from withdrawals from savings banks. Shcherbakov thinks that the rumor is unfounded. In just two days in office Shcherbakov has received many letters that have to be followed up. Shcherbakov says that the Cabinet of Ministers is just being formed and that perhaps he has been given one of the least enviable jobs.

Rumors of Further Bill Exchange Dispelled

91P50111A Moscow TRUD in Russian 2 Mar 91 p 4

[Article under rubric "Answering Readers' Questions": "Rumors and Money"]

[Text] *Persistent rumors are circulating that the new 50- and 100-ruble bills will be "frozen," that they will not be accepted as payment and can only be deposited into savings accounts. They also say that soon there will be an exchange of old 10- and 25-ruble bills for new. Is this so? (G. Krasnov, Moscow)*

Head of the USSR Gosbank Administration on currency circulation Yu. Balagurov answers.

There will be no "freezing" of the new bills. This is just rumor. In the worst case this would have undermined the currency circulation in the country. There will be no exchange of 10- and 25-ruble bills for new. So there is no reason to panic.

By the way, listeners of the "Mayak" radio station even asked me this question: will the metal coins from 10 kopeks all the way to a ruble be exchanged? The answer is the same: of course not!

Poll Places Blame for Economics on Leaders

OW0603002591 Moscow Central Television First Program and Orbita Networks in Russian 1900 GMT 4 Mar 91

[From the "Utro 120 + 30" program]

[Text] The All-Union Center for Studying Public Opinion, headed by Academician Tatyana Zaslavskaya, regularly conducts polls. In other words, it is interested in what we, the rank and file citizens of our country, think about various issues. Naturally, many questions concern the economy and it was precisely an economic poll that we requested from this center for this program. They kindly provided it.

So, what did we think in December 1990? The economic situation in our country was assessed as being in trouble by 36.9 percent of those questioned; as being critical by 55.8 percent; while 2.1 percent of those questioned considered it to be satisfactory—I would like to know who these people are?

What is the main cause of our current difficulties? Mistakes of past pre-perestroyka leaders was the explanation given by 11.5 percent of those questioned; 45.2 percent, or four times more, said it was mistakes of the leadership during the perestroyka period—only a few years ago this sort of correlation would probably have been impossible—while 23.7 percent of those asked thought that the reason for our difficulties lies in the nature of socialism itself.

I am afraid to elicit the wrath of my bosses, but I too am in solidarity with these people, if what we have built is called socialism.

Here are some more statistics. First, I shall read the question while you think about what your response to it would be. Then, I shall acquaint you with the results of a poll. So, what should be done in a situation when a product disappears from store shelves and there is no opportunity to rapidly increase its output?

Well? The result of the poll: Of those questioned, 16.2 percent propose increasing the price on this product so that it would be found freely on the shelves, while 59.7 percent of those questioned consider that the sale of such products should be organized through cards and coupons. So, it seems that our leaders are working in precisely this direction. Of course, in the opinion of many experts, this will hardly help us change to a market economy quickly.

Now, another question: What will people do if their situation deteriorates during the transition to market [relations]? Of those questioned, 34.7 percent express would their protests in private conversations. Well, over the past decades we have become accustomed to kitchen debates, but here is a new trend—25.8 percent would protest at meetings and demonstrations, 19.6 percent organize strikes, and 36.2 percent begin mass disturbances and riots. Only 11 percent of the sample still believe in the possibilities of the press and the authority of the ruling bodies.

Economic Situation Encourages Crime

LD0503155191 Moscow TASS in English 1515 GMT 5 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Aleksandr Borisov]

[Text] Moscow March 5 TASS—The present economic situation creates favourable conditions for a growth in crime in the country, Vyacheslav Runyshkov, head of the chief administration on socialist property embezzlement and profeteering of the Soviet Interior Ministry, told a briefing here today.

The volume of unsatisfied consumer demand on the Soviet domestic market rose by 55 billion roubles last year, totalling 238 billion roubles.

In his opinion, if all supplies to all-union stocks are frustrated, as was the case last year, the situation on the consunmer market will not change for the better this year. Economic crime will rise even higher, despite measures taken by law enforcement bodies.

According to data cited at the briefing, last year law enforcement bodies, together with representatives of workers' control, inspected over 326,000 shops and public catering establishments.

Inspections revealed offences in every second establishment of the Soviet Ministry of Trade and every third consumers' cooperative. Inspectors detected 88 million roubles worth of goods concealed from shoppers.

Industry Official on Commercial Problems

Moscow TASS in English 1023 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow March 6 TASS—"The Soviet Union has the means to pull itself out of the difficult foreign trade situation, it has landed in through its own fault," Chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Chamber of Commerce and Industry Vladislav Malkevich told the weekly "GOVERNMENT HERALD", that published an interview with him today.

"However, it is naive to expect our export potential to be boosted merely by foreign trade's decentralisation," he said, noting that the USSR now accounts for less than one percent of the total volume of world trade, estimated at about eight trillion U.S. dollars.

Malkevich believes foreign investors regard the following factors as a huge advantage of the Soviet market: Single customs and patents territory, single finance system and single economic space. "If we fail to preserve all this, we will be hurled back many decades and the ideas of a powerful single market will be buried in the bog of economic feudalism. Then the Soviet Union's participation in GATT and the International Monetary Fund will be ruled out, as well as equitable talks with the European Community," he stressed.

Asked about the negative reaction of the European Parliament and the European Council to the events in the Baltic republics, Malkevich said he believed it to be "hasty and inadequate".

"It is dangerous when political decisions are made on an emotional basis," he said, adding that foreign capital would not be invested in the USSR if it lacked homogenous economic space and a single legislative system.

Moscow 'Anticrisis Committee' Food Report

914D0162A Moscow TRUD in Russian 2 Mar 91 p 1

[Report by TASS correspondent A. Skobelev: "Immediate Measures Are Needed"]

[Text]**"We have reached a limit, beyond which we must speak of a food blockade of the city and the need to save it," noted Yu. Luzhkov, chairman of the Moscow Soviet Executive Committee at a meeting of the city anticrisis committee.**

Because of poor provision of meat and milk the capital's situation is worse than alarming. Deliveries of meat to the city, for example, have practically ceased and the 30,000 tons in the depots are only enough for a week. Out of 1,240 stores that sell meat, 900 do not have goods. The situation with raw meat is even worse. There are only 3-4 days worth of stocks, and it has been necessary to close down a processing plant. Hungary is no longer delivering raw meat to Moscow as it did in the past—there is no money to pay for it. On the other hand the USSR Ministry of Trade has ruled to allot the city 8,000 tons of meat from the state reserve. The situation with milk remains bad: The capital is under supplied by 500 tons per day.

The nonfulfillment of the obligations of Moscow Oblast and a number of other oblasts was named among the main causes. For example, instead of the 80 tons of milk in accordance with the state order, Ryazan Oblast supplies no more than seven tons per day. The same thing applies to several republics, particularly Lithuania and Moldova.

A decision was made to immediately create teams composed of deputies and leaders of the city soviet executive committee that will travel out to the localities for negotiations. At the same time it was decided to send a letter to the president of the USSR with an urgent request that he promptly review the question of food supply to Moscow, obligate all suppliers to immediately clear their debts in accordance with the state order, and allot money for the purchase of imported raw meat and powdered milk from abroad, as well as other types of food whose stocks may run out as early as the middle of April in the capital.

Lithuanian Food Price Compensation Begins

914D0160A Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 1 Mar 91 Union Edition p 2

[Article by Nikolay Lashkevich: "Compensation Before the Price Increase"]

[Text]**Lithuania has started to pay the first round of monetary compensation allowances, the system for which was worked out by the government in anticipation of the upcoming increases in retail food prices.**

It appears that by now everybody has accepted the fact that prices will have to be raised. Tentative prices for many food products and consumer goods are already known. For instance, "Shilalis" color television sets will now cost over 1,000 rubles [R] (previously they were R720); Lithuanian-made men's shoes will be R64-70 (previously R48). It is anticipated that retail food prices will increase 2.6 times.

However, it is still not clear when the price increase will go into effect. It looks, though, judging by how fast the government started to undertake compensatory measures, that the republic's residents will get an answer to this question very soon.

How much will the compensation be?

For unemployed pensioners, full-time students who receive a stipend, unemployed people living on unemployment benefits, and women on maternity leave the compensation will be R85 a month. Those working on contract will receive R105 a month, of which R20 is the differential supplement established by the management of enterprises, offices, and organizations. Income cannot go below this guaranteed minimum (R85 and R105 a month, together with wages and salaries). It is permitted to set them higher. Salaries of employees in budget-financed organizations will be raised. For instance, teacher's compensation will amount to 70 percent. A socially low price ceiling on goods for children and the elderly will be established; school meals will be partially compensated for; and financial aid to families with many children will be provided.

The Lithuanian Government appealed to citizens of the republic asking them to "support stabilization efforts." The nearest future will show how republic citizens react to the price increases and whether they will be satisfied with the compensatory payments.

Ruble Exchange Exposes Fraud

LD0603200691 Moscow TASS in English 1634 GMT 6 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Aleksander Borisov]

[Text] Moscow March 6 TASS—The Soviet Interior Ministry's chief directorate for combating profiteering and misappropriation has exposed more than 6,000 cases of fraud during the exchange of 50 and 100 rouble notes in the Soviet Union, directorate head Vyacheslav Runyshkov told TASS.

About 73 per cent of all cases were disclosed in the distribution network. More than 200 attempts to circumvent the rules were aborted in the banking system.

Runyshkov told TASS that nearly 50,000 enterprises, subordinated to different authorities and based on different forms of ownership, were inspected. As a result, decisions not to allow exchange of money were taken in more than 20,000 cases, involving a total of 77 million roubles. Distribution network enterprises solicited the exchange of 45 per cent of this total.

To date 155 criminal proceedings have been instituted. More than 4,000 officials and materially responsible workers have been subjected to administrative punishment.

In one case, Runyshkov said, charges of abuse of office were brought against a commercial bank leader in the city of Bishkek (former Frunze) in Kyrgyzstan, a Soviet Central Asian Republic. The man engineered the exchange of more than 143,000 roubles in defiance of the rules.

Scientific

Cosmos 2,136 Satellite Launched 6 Mar

LD0703100291 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0925 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow, 7 Mar (TASS)—Another artificial earth satellite, Cosmos 2,136, was launched yesterday by the carrier rocket, Soyuz, in the Soviet Union. Scientific equipment designed to continue space research is mounted on board the satellite, which has been put on orbit with the following parameters: initial period of revolution 90.2 minutes; maximal distance from the earth's surface (apogee): 336 km; minimal distance from the earth's surface (perigee): 256 km; orbit inclination 62.9 degrees. Apart from the scientific equipment the satellite has a radio system from precise measurements of the elements of the orbit and a radio telemetry system to convey to earth data on the functioning of the instruments and the scientific equipment. The equipment on board the satellite is operating normally.

Cosmonauts Continue Mir Space Mission

LD0403161791 Moscow TASS in English 1530 GMT 28 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondent Rena Kuznetsova]

[Text] Moscow March 4 TASS—Soviet cosmonauts Viktor Afanasyev and Musa Manarov are today implementing an experiment on studies of dynamic processes in weightlessness. In addition, the crew are doing maintenance work at the Mir research complex.

The cosmonauts have been working for three months today in orbit. Together with Japanese reporter Toyohiro Akiyama, they came to the Mir complex on last December 4 to relieve their colleagues Gennadi Manakov and Gennadi Strekalov.

During this period, in addition to joint work as members of the mixed team, they have fulfilled extensive programme of nature-study, technological, medicobiological and astrophysical experiments and studies in the interests of Soviet economic sectors.

The cosmonauts worked in open space three times. During their first space walk-out on January 7, they repaired the outside hatch of the Kvant-2 module, which was a great headache for cosmonauts and specialists.

During the two following walk-outs on January 23 and 26, Afanasyev and Manarov installed two folding telescopic jibs on the astrophysical module Kvant to continue work in space, including work to shift solar batteries.

Specialists believe that the cosmonauts did good job outside the station. This is corroborated by the fact that they needed three days to do work planned for four days.

The eighth main expedition will continue until next May. On May 12 they will welcome a mixed crew, including a British representative, most probably Helen Sharman. Sharman and Timothy Mace, British candidates for a space mission, are now training at the Gagarin cosmonauts' training centre near Moscow.

Further on Experiments

LD0103114191 Moscow TASS in English 1120 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Text] Mission Control Centre March 1 TASS—Soviet cosmonauts Viktor Afanasyev and Musa Manarov are winding up their third month of work in space.

Today, the crew is performing another series of experiments on the Pion plant further to explore the heat and mass exchange process in zero gravity and obtain additional information for engineers developing advanced equipment.

The cosmonauts used the propulsion unit to correct the space station's orbit. Its parameters now are as follows:

—maximum distance from the earth's surface - 399 kilometers

—minimum distance from the earth's surface - 372 kilometers

—period of revolution - 9992.1 minutes

—orbit inclination - 51.6 degrees.

Work aboard the space laboratory continues.

Military

Army's Kutsenko Analyzes Gulf Battle Lessons

PM0603154391 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 2 Mar 91 Second Edition p 5

[Interview with Major General I.I. Kutsenko, first deputy chief of the USSR Armned Forces General Staff Strategic Operations Research Center, by M. Zakharchuk; place and date not given: "Persian Gulf: When the Smoke Cleared"]

[Text] Combat actions have been suspended in the Persian Gulf. The world public's attention will be riveted for a long time yet on this armed conflict, which was perhaps the biggest since World War II; it will be comprehensively analyzed and studied. Major General N.I. Kutsenko, first deputy chief of the USSR Armed Forces General Staff Strategic Operations Research Center, told TASS correspondent M. Zakharchuk of the first, purely preliminary results of the six-week "Desert Storm" operation:

"First of all, I want to say that there was nothing particularly new in the way the operation was conducted by the multinational force, led by the United States, from the operational-tactical viewpoint.

"In practically all the actions by ground forces and aircraft electronic warfare was widely used throughout the battles to disrupt Iraqi units' and formations' command systems. The Americans and their allies, in all command and control echelons, from battalion and above, used space communications, which turned out to be as reliable as line communications. The multinational force headquarters also used space reconnaissance to monitor the situation at the front.

The unorthodox operational deception actions and measures used by Iraq are rather interesting from the military viewpoint. Aware of his army's weak spots, Saddam Husayn did not confront the multinational force's aircraft in the air. Making extensive use of field fortifications, deception, and disinformation, Iraq kept its air force intact during the first massive surprise attacks from the air. The Iraqi defensive system included many fortifications in the form of berms, ditches filled with oil, concrete shelters and emplacements for combat equipment, and minefields.

"The Iraqi forces' defenses were disposed in depth. The most battleworthy and best trained formations and units of the republican guard were used in the second echelons and reserves. However, its advantages were never realized.

"At this point I would like to dwell on a very significant aspect. Since Iraq has a great deal of Soviet-made weaponry and combat equipment and some Iraqi officers attended military academies in our country, some people saw the conflict in the Persian Gulf as a clash between U.S. and Soviet military equipment and weapons and between their tactics and strategy.

"I think it is clearly wrong to approach the question in this way, if only because, in the first place, the Iraqi Army is not only armed with Soviet military equipment—it has been armed by many countries in the East and in the West. Second, as has been said before, the number of Iraqi officers trained in our country is negligible. The bulk of them attended military training establishments in France, Italy, and Britain. So they studied the tactics and strategy of the armies of many states. Finally, as is known, we did not have any military advisers in Iraq, but it did have a wealth of experience as a result of the war with Iran. Basically that was where the Iraqi officers developed their own ways and means of waging an armed struggle. But it was experience of position warfare with an equal enemy, and, evidently, the Iraqi military command set too much store by it and failed to consider that in the present conflict it faced powerful modern armed forces.

"Third, not everything depends on hardware in military actions. It is the professional expertise of those who operate it that is of decisive significance. However, in the Iraqi Army they both leave much to be desired.

"It has to be said also that the vast majority of Iraq's armaments, including those made by us, were developed mainly in the sixties and early seventies. Obviously, they were several generations older than the corresponding armaments of the multinational force. At the same time, as is known, the modern fighters the Iraqis bought from us were barely used at all, with over 150 aircraft being moved to Iran.

"Nonetheless, I want to specially emphasize that the USSR Defense Ministry kept a very close eye on all the events as they developed so swiftly in the Persian Gulf. Serious conclusions will be drawn from this armed conflict and we will learn essential and useful lessons in the entire spectrum of modern military organizational development. Suffice it to say, that in the very near future there will be a scientific-practical conference on the events in the Perisan Gulf, which will examine in the greatest detail all aspects of the armed conflict.

"As for the United States, the war against Iraq was a proving ground for its latest weapon systems and combat equipment.

"Incidentally, the operation of the allied forces' equipment in the desert climate demonstrated some shortcomings as well as advantages. For example, the "Abrams" tanks' gas-turbine engines often broke down when sand got into them. The "Apache" helicopters had certain defects, too.

I must also mention that our tanks, helicopters, and small arms, used by the Syrian army, which participated in the operation as part of the multinational force, were effective, according to Syrian Defense Minister Corps General M. Talas.

In conclusion, I want to say that the effect and performance of specific weapon systems and combat equipment used by U.S. and allied forces will be thoroughly analyzed by representatives of many countries' armed forces. I have not the slightest doubt that this war will give us much food for thought, too."

Security Aspects of Defense Sufficiency

PM0603165191 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 5 Mar 91 First Edition pp 1-2

[Marshal of Armored Troops O. Losik article under "Military Reform: Polemical Notes" rubric: "Where the Limits of Reasonable Sufficiency Are"]

[Text] Among the draft basic documents concerning our defense building that are being discussed, including in the press, a special place is now held by the draft document on military doctrine published in a special edition of the journal VOYENNAYA MYSL. This is understandable, for it is a question of a most important and complex sphere in the life of the state—its defense and security. In this connection I cannot disagree with the idea of the need for a more considered approach to assessing various aspects in the formulation of military doctrine—an idea voiced in the polemical notes of Major General I. Vorobyev, retired, (KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 26 January 1991). I will stipulate in advance that my notes too are based on personal experience and my own individual perception of the problem.

It is known that many changes have occurred since the current doctrine was proclaimed in 1987. Radical transformations are being implemented in the countries of East Europe. We are witnessing the virtual disintegration of the Warsaw Treaty Organization's military structure. A major new military-political factor has emerged—a united Germany.

There are also substantial changes in our Armed Forces, where measures are already being put into practice within the framework of the military reform. Conversion has begun, the level of military spending has been brought down...

How will this affect the country's defense; will our ability to repel aggression be reduced, while the military potential of the United States and NATO, let us say, is not only not diminishing but is even increasing? Questions of this kind cannot fail to give rise to concern, particularly now that a large-scale war involving the use of the latest means of combat suddenly flared up close to our borders, in the Persian Gulf region. Naturally, you also think about this on familiarizing yourself with the draft new doctrine. For, if you follow logic, it must adequately reflect the degree of the external threat to our state and be realistic and scientifically substantiated.

Hardly anyone would object to the fact that our doctrine must be of a defensive nature. We threaten no one and have no territorial claims. Hence our pledge never, in any circumstances, to be the first to begin military operations against any state is understandable, but the need for a scientific assessment of the actual military-political situation in the world and of the potential of modern armies and arms is all the more acute. We cannot close our eyes to the fact, for example, that the United States and NATO have not adopted such a pledge. Therefore, we must not perceive our rejection of the first use of military operations as consenting in advance to giving the initiative to the other side, whose modern means of combat are capable of deciding the outcome of a war in a matter of hours. In such a situation it would be imprudent, to say the least, to gamble on a temporizing approach or on passivity. Not to mention the fact that staking everything on a retaliatory strike is only possible at all given a fortified, stable, and efficient system of early detection and warning of a military attack and high mobilization and combat readiness—which we still have to see that we concern ourselves with.

Retaliatory actions can probably be effective under conditions whereby the defender has a military potential comparable with the enemy's and comparable real military forces in the sector or salient of a possible strike. A graphic example from Soviet history is the battle on the Kursk Bulge in the summer of 1943. At that time the Soviet troops, while in no way inferior to the enemy, deliberately switched to the defensive, accomplished the task of defense, maintained their offensive potential, and switched to the offensive. Today, if you look at the situation on the strategic plane, let us assume, in the western salient, we have ended up one-on-one against a military force which is superior to us by 50-100 percent. I would not want to create here the image of any enemy, but we also must not fail to think about this.

There is also the fact that the U.S. and NATO leaders, unlike us, have not yet adopted a pledge renouncing first use of nuclear weapons. From the viewpoint of a just world, panhuman values, and humanism, our statement has an inspiring ring to it. The absolute majority of the planet's inhabitants will undoubtedly vote for this USSR position. But from the security viewpoint? Even today, from time to time, representatives of the top military-political echelon in the West openly confirm their readiness to be the first to use nuclear weapons if they deem the circumstances to demand this. Let us recall, for example, the recent television appearance of the U.S. defense secretary, in which he unequivocally approved of the use of the atom bombs against the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945. And he hinted that the use of nuclear weapons against Iraq too could not be ruled out...

Our statement on not being the first to use nuclear weapons is based on the new political thinking. We also realize clear and distinct political principles in other questions of building the Armed Forces, in operational plans, and in operational and combat training.

Yes, we would like to proceed from the premise that war has become totally obsolete as a means of achieving political ends under modern conditions and has become unacceptable and inadmissible. However, all kinds of wars—both interstate and civil wars—arise in the world and will obviously do so for a long time. These tens and hundreds of wars and armed conflicts have already claimed millions of human lives. Do we have the right not to think about this, too, when elaborating our own security strategy? History has known many dreamy geniuses who have painted attractive pictures of a future without wars or armies. Maybe this will happen some time, but for the time being we live under conditions of an unprecedented accumulation of weapons and the intensification of all sorts of social, political, national, religious, global, and regional contradictions and disagreements. The process of arms limitation and disarmament is proceeding with difficulty. So we must be realists. And if we have solemnly and unambiguously declared before the whole world that we will not be the first to use nuclear weapons, we are obliged to ensure unity between the political and the military-technical principles on which that statement is based. We now rely only on the retaliatory use of nuclear weapons, and so we must ensure their protection and their quality and quantity, which will make a retaliatory strike possible and guaranteed. Need I say how important impartial and scientifically verified calculations devoid of a political veneer are?

According to the draft doctrine, military building in the USSR is associated with the need to observe the principle of reliable and reasonable sufficiency for defense while maintaining military equilibrium at the lowest possible level. But what does "reliable" and "reasonable" mean? How much "sufficiency" is required? Where is it—this "lowest possible level"? What is needed are scientifically substantiated calculations and precise definitions of the said concepts. Otherwise various kinds of speculation cannot be ruled out here. "Specialists" from the institute headed by Academician G. Arbatov have proposed establishing Soviet sufficiency at the level of 500 missiles and several combined arms divisions. At the same time history long ago proved that the simple and correct criterion of sufficiency for defense is parity and equality in the correlation of forces. Do we have the right to disregard that principle now and put our trust in some political measures which can supposedly compensate for a lack of forces? No, if someone has acquired "superiority" and his opponent has an "obvious insufficiency," then, as a rule, the danger of being tempted to show force also increases. Is this not borne out by Iraq's aggression against Kuwait, for example? Is it not borne out by the nature and the outcome of the war between the international force headed by the United States and Iraq itself? Or take this fact. Only recently the world saw the military-strategic equilibrium between the USSR and the United States and between NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organization as a stabilizing factor. It no longer exists. Is this why some people have recently been interfering shamelessly in our internal affairs and trying to point out to us what to do and what not to do?

The draft document on military doctrine also makes the strength, composition, and structure of the Armed Forces conditional on the principle of "reliable and reasonable sufficiency," and priority is unambiguously given to forces and means earmarked for repulsing possible aggression. Does this mean that structures even at division and regiment level and their armament must be only defensive? In my view, such an approach would run counter to the realities of developed countries' modern armies and to the nature of the operation and of combined arms combat. It is known that in connection with the colossally increased firepower and mobility of modern armies the defensive-offensive nature predominates in their combat operations. Defense on all scales is conducted actively, with clearly expressed elements of offensive operations (counterattacks, counterstrikes, counteroffensive). With a different defense, defeat is simply inevitable, the defense is suicidal. Naturally, the combat composition and the structure of our combined arms formations (up to the front inclusive, evidently) must also be universal, i.e. suitable for both defensive and offensive operations.

This also concerns armaments. In all armies of the world, including ours, their main branches long ago became universal—suitable for both offense and defense. Nevertheless, a pseudoscientific "theory" of the division of arms into offensive and defensive has appeared recently. At the same time, if a type of weapon is regarded as offensive, then this is a "bad" weapon, like a tank for example, and it should be done away with. It is not hard to imagine what distortions could result from this "theory" if we are guided thoughtlessly by it in further reducing the Armed Forces and defining their composition and structure. As life shows, those same tanks were and still are a universal type of weapon, suitable for both offense and defense.

Someone will be sure to say: A doctrine that constitutes a system of accepted views in the state on ensuring its military security cannot descend to such details as the operational or tactical training of troops, the classification of combat hardware and armaments, etc. This is all true. Only it also must not be forgotten that the state's security will also depend on "details" of this kind, which derive, incidentally, from the premises enshrined in the document under consideration. I believe it is necessary to proceed from this in further work on it. To proceed from the realities of today's uneasy world and scientifically substantiated views.

Yazov Says Autumn Call-Up 100,000 Short

LD0603134691 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1200 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Interview with Marshal of the Soviet Union Dmitriy Timofeyevich Yazov, USSR minister of defense, by unidentified reporter; place and date not given; from the "Armed Forces and Society" program—recorded]

[Text] [Reporter] What is the situation in the Armed Forces to date, primarily regarding the call-up? What are the results of this complicated autumn 1990 call-up and the winter months of 1991?

[Yazov] Well, I have told you that we failed to call up over 100,000.

[Reporter] Of those who should have been in the Army and Navy ranks?

[Yazov] Yes, these are Armenians, Georgians, and inhabitants of the Baltic republics.

[Reporter] How do you compensate for this then? What is your way out of the situation?

[Yazov] There is no way out. We are simply not up to strength. That is all.

[Reporter] What about the withdrawal of troops? Maybe you can somehow compensate for this by disbanding some units.

[Yazov] Well, I have already said this, that we are disbanding some of the divisions we are withdrawing and using them for replacements in those units that are to be preserved.

Scientists Develop Portable Explosives Detector

LD2702010691 Moscow TASS in English 0959 GMT 26 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondent Viktor Yelmakov]

[Text] Novosibirsk February 26 TASS—Specialists at the Novosibirsk Applied Physics Institute have designed a portable instrument for detecting explosives. The device, resembling a hair-drying fan, detects explosives by their smell.

"Our detector reacts to any tracks of explosives," an institute spokesman told TASS. "It is must more sensitive than similar foreign devices. It does not react to any outside smells of paints, petrol, perfume or eau-de-cologne. This year, the institute will begin serial production of detectors."

Military Districts Create Disarmament Departments

LD0603140491 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1200 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] New departments dealing with disarmament issues are being set up in staffs of military districts. This has been done in accordance with the Paris Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. Colonel Zorin, the head of the Transcaucasus Military District, said the following on the work of such a department in Transcaucasus Military District: We must ensure the implemenation of the treaty and create all envisaged conditions for its fulfillment. We will monitor the movement of military equipment and weapons both in the district and outside it, take account of weapons which are to be destroyed, and provide for the work of foreign delegations on the territory of the district. We will establish by every means the necessary contacts with councils of ministers, foreign and interior ministries, and committees of state security of Transcaucasus republics.

Nizhniy Novgorod Jamming Installation 'Dismantled'

PM0403120591 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 28 Feb 91 Union Edition p 2

[Anatoliy Yershov report under "Direct Line" rubric: "Secret Installation Dismantled"]

[Text] Nizhniy Novgorod—An installation that the city's inhabitants called "the silencer" has been closed down.

In the postwar years, twenty or so radio transmitters and aerials were set up here with whose assistance various foreign radio stations were jammed. All the equipment at this secret installation has recently been dismantled, and the premises handed over to the city radio center. As for the three high metal masts on which the aerials were fixed, a new use has been found for these. Thus, after dismantling two masts will be used in the construction of a new radio relay line between Nizhniy Novgorod and Bogorodsk-Pavlovo which will make it possible to improve television reception in remote areas. The third is now in use following the installation of equipment for the city's "Altay" radio-telephone communication system.

Moscow Commandant Brings Court Case for Assault

LD0603223591 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 2000 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] As the "Interfax" agency reprots, a court case on an action brought by Colonel-General (Nikolay Smirnov), the capital's military commandant, against (Nikolay Moskovchenko) has begun in Moscow. (Moskovchenko) is a retired major and the deputy chairman of the "Shchit" union for the social protection of servicemen. (Moskovchenko) is accused of causing light bodily harm to (Smirnov).

It happened on 10 September last year, when during the picketing of the building of the USSR Defense Ministry by a group of servicemen' mothers, the general snatched from the hands of one of them a placard with the picture of her son who was killed in the army, and tore it up. After this (Moskovchenko) gave the general a slap across his face, which is now described as light bodily harm. To tell the truth, our generals can apparently be wounded easily, and it does not become a retired major to attack a serving colonel-general.

Baltic Republics

Estonia's Narva Council Approves Union Referendum

LD0603122591 Tallinn Domestic Service in Estonian 1800 GMT 5 Mar 91

[Text] Just now the computer has produced a piece of ETA news from Narva:

Today's session of the Narva town council decided that on 17 March a Union-wide referendum will be carried out on the territory that is subordinate to the town council. The document adopted states that the referendum will be carried out in strict accordance with the USSR law on nationwide voting and the USSR referendum. Tomorrow, participation in the Union-wide referendum will also be discussed at Kohtla-Jarve and Sillamae town council sessions.

More Towns To Hold Referendum

LD0603192291 Tallinn Domestic Service in Estonian 1500 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] An ETA correspondent reports from Kohtla-Jarve that 26 of the 50 people's deputies took part in today's Kohtla-Jarve Town Council session that adopted a resolution to join the all-Union referendum on 17 March. A similar decision was also made today by Sillamae Town Council. Members of Narva Town Council decided yesterday to hold an all-Union referendum in their town.

Lithuanian Defense Chief on Troop Movements

LD0603171191 Tallinn Domestic Service in Estonian 1500 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Audrius Butkevicius, director general of the Lithuanian defense department, said in an interview to a Baltic News Service correspondent that the activity of the Soviet Army in Lithuania demonstrates that even the simplest rules of behavior are being ignored. (?It is customary) for major troop movements to be coordinated with the government; at the least, the government should be informed of them. The Lithuanian Government, however, has no information at all.

According to information received by the country's defense department, movements of a large number of military transport vehicles—including armored vehicles—have been noted on Lithuanian roads within the past two weeks. According to information from Vilnius, a column of 10 military vehicles drove past the Lithuanian Supreme Council building last night. According to unofficial information from servicemen, the military transport activity is related to the annual so-called trainee command exercises and to the relocation of forces arriving from East Europe.

The defense department's director general, however, does not believe these explanations: The extent of the movements is considerably bigger than during similar exercises in past years. Apart from that, servicemen also have now movement routes.

Butkevicius refused to comment on the activity of the Soviet army and only said that the army leadership must present an official explanation to the republican government. The Lithuanian press associates all these events, however, with preparations for the 17 March referendum.

Lithuanian Radio, TV Workers Begin Hunger Strike

LD0603175391 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in Lithuanian 1700 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] The workers of Lithuanian Independent Radio and Television today started a hunger strike at the occupied radio and television buildings. They demand that the property be returned without delay to its lawful masters.

This protest action has been started by the Akistata [confrontation] creative group of the editorial office of economic broadcasts. Later they will be replaced by journalists from other editorial offices. The Akistata organizers are staying in a small truck bearing an inscription "Hunger strike" in various languages. By the way, on the eve of the action they announced in a television broadcast their intentions, and then found that the truck's steering wheel was missing. Therefore they had difficulties in bringing it to the place of the protest action. A correspondent was told about this by one of the initiators of the strike, journalist Virginija Motiejuniene.

The Soviet army soldiers reacted to this protest in their own way. Having moved iron barriers from the buildings, they increased their territorial occupation.

Landsbergis Sees Ambiguity in Gorbachev Remarks

LD0703102091 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in Russian 2000 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] The statement by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev that the Baltic countries could achieve independence, made at a meeting with British Prime Minister John Major, could be understood in two ways. Such is the opinion of Vytautas Landsbergis, chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania. His comments on this were announced today at a Supreme Council briefing.

On the one hand President Gorbachev publicly states that the independence of the Baltic countries is possible. On the other hand he states his conditions. If the republics follow the constitutional way, if this means independence only in accordance with the Soviet Constitution, this is an old formula that in reality means the burial of our independence. But if this is understood as constitutional solutions which arise from the will of the sovereign nations and the right to choose, Lithuania is advancing along this constitutional path, Vytautas Landsbergis noted.

Landsbergis Tops Lithuanian Popularity Poll

PM0603154791 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 2 Mar 91 Union Edition p 1

[TASS report: "Popularity Scale Has Altered"]

[Text] According to a report in the newspaper LETUVOS RITAS, a poll carried out by the Lithuanian department of the USSR Center for Public Opinion Research indicated that 44 percent of its participants give their preference among public figures in Lithuania to V. Landsbergis—chairman of the republic Supreme Soviet.

Second in the list of most popular politicians is A. Brazauskas, chairman of the Lithuanian Democratic Labor party (formerly the autonomous Lithuanian Communist Party). His rating is 21 percent.

Until recently republic former Premier K. Prunskiene has headed the dozen or so most popular figures. Now she finds herself in fourth position.

Lithuanian Official on 'Persecution' of Communists

PM0703115791 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 27 Feb 91 First Edition p 6

[Interview with E. Tvardovskiy, first secretary of Radvilishkskiy Rayon party committee, by correspondent Captain 2d Rank V. Gromak; place and date not given: "A Constant Target"]

[Excerpts] Not a day goes by in Lithuania without us hearing about new instances of moral and physical terror inflicted upon communists. This is particularly manifest in rayons distant from the center. One of those rayons is Radvilishkskiy. Our correspondent talked to E. Tvardovskiy, first secretary of the rayon party committee. [passage omitted]

[Gromak] What is the situation like in your rayon at the moment?

[Tvardovskiy] Generally speaking, the situation is outwardly calm. Our railroad junction joins one of the most important transport arteries in the country. Transport is working well, as are enterprises, institutions, schools, and stores. True, people have been under strain since the January events in Vilnius. But, as far as we can see, many have begun to rethink events: the direction being taken by our society and the direction in which the people are being led by Landsbergis....

The greatest source of concern for us communists in the rayon is the activity of the territorial defense department. Several dozen militants are concentrated in the rayon. According to our information, they are well armed and based in the city mayor's office. Their specific actions consist in a large-scale, well-coordinated campaign against communists. Moral-political terror is being inflicted upon leading party workers and communists at local level. Their families are also being subjected to persecution and threats.

[Gromak] I have heard that your own family is being victimized as well. Is that true?

[Tvardovskiy] It is indeed. I have been threatened with reprisals more than once. My father was beaten up a few days ago. He is now in the hospital. My family had to spend the night in a military unit. Someone warned us over the telephone that my family and I would be dealt with that night. I was forced to telephone the military: I requested a vehicle from them and took my family to their unit. There are eyewitnesses who can confirm that two vehicles full of people drew up at my house that night....

[Gromak] In my opinion, this connection between the Communist Party and the military worries a great many people here in Lithuania. Why did you not take a rayon party committee vehicle, for example, and request protection from the militia rather than turn to the military?

[Tvardovskiy] To be perfectly frank, law enforcement structures in the rayon, such as the militia and the public prosecutor's office, do not have people's confidence. Everyone in the rayon is perfectly well aware whose side they are on. That is why we see the Soviet Army as our only protector. We have no one else to turn to. It is force of circumstance.... Let me tell you again what is going on here: As far as Landsbergis and his stooges are concerned, it is a large-scale action against "vestiges of the communist ideology in Lithuania." There have been attacks against me and other communists in the past. But you must understand that the situation has now been aggravated in the extreme. The reason is that in the present situation Landsbergis and his close associates need to shift the blame from themselves to someone else. This is one of the reasons why persecution of communists has intensified.

[Gromak] Eduard Viktorovich, as secretary of the rayon party committee, do you think life would have been made easier for you if the National Salvation Committee had been legalized after the January events?

[Tvardovskiy] No, I do not. The fact of the matter is that the committee is working underground: This is also a forced measure—people have to defend themselves. It is just further confirmation that the situation in the republic is unstable. I trust the National Salvation Committee, as it was set up on the initiative of the Congress of Democratic Forces, whereas I do not trust the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet.

[Gromak] Now my last question. You are in Vilnius at the moment. Are you not afraid of returning to your rayon?

[Tvardovskiy] No, I am not afraid. You must understand, I have thought everything through again and can firmly say that I made my choice in 1976, when I joined the CPSU.

Brazauskas on Democratic Labor Party's Aims

PM0403093991 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 26 Feb 91 Union Edition p 2

[Nikolay Lashkevich report under "Direct Line" rubric: "Switch to Opposition?"]

[Text] Vilnius—The Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party (formerly the Lithuania Autonomous Communist Party) announced at a session of the party's council that it is adopting a course toward "asserting a realistic Lithuanian independence policy."

The party leader, former deputy premier A. Brazauskas, called the policy of aiming at "independence at any cost" an emotive, ritualistic policy, and called for the unity of left-wing political forces that are oriented toward a realistic policy for achieving an independent Lithuanian state. In this way the Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party has reasserted its former stance on the problem of state sovereignty. Lithuania's path to independence is a gradual process that takes account of existing realities, including the fact that it has been part of the USSR for many years. Specifically, Brazauskas called the normalization of relations with the Soviet Union, the conclusion of economic and political agreements, and the earliest possible commencement of negotiations one of the main tasks facing the republic. In the very near future a concept to revive the state will be made public by the party, and then it will become absolutely clear what position the "laborites" occupy at the current phase.

However, it is already possible to draw the conclusion that the Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party is switching to a more decisive, more adversarial policy, and is rejecting "the fear of being called demagogues" and "an enemy of the people," as Brazauskas said. It was decided to transform the left-wing faction in the Lithuanian parliament into a Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party faction, and to set up similar factions in the rayon and city local governments.

K. Prunskiene, returning to Lithuania after a short visit abroad, also announced the beginning of a new phase in her political activity. She declared at a news conference that the practical realization of the independence policy must be constructed on a realistic basis, and that no country in the world today can ignore the Soviet Union with a view to supporting even "so sacred a cause" as Lithuanian independence. Illusions are dangerous in politics, Prunskiene stressed. It cannot be ruled out that the former Lithuanian prime minister will set up a new party or parliamentary faction. In any case she intends to conduct an independent policy in the Supreme Soviet, one opposed to the radical wing of the deputies, and also intends to establish relations with the foreign policy association under the leadership of E. Shevardnadze.

Latvian Legislature Says Referendum Not Binding

LD0703024591 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1710 GMT 6 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Galina Kuchina]

[Text] Riga, 6 Mar (TASS)—The Latvian Supreme Soviet has decided that the "Union referendum on the republic's territory will not have juridical consequences." A document adopted today also says that state authorities will not participate in holding the referendum. This decision is explained by the declaration of independence and the results of the Latvian poll on 3 March. The decision confirms that "the Latvian Republic never entered the composition of the USSR voluntarily."

A number of deputies proposed indicating in the document that no obstacles will be put in the way of those wishing to express their opinion on the future of the USSR. This view was not taken into consideration. In reply, one of the deputies stated: "Let them vote in the military units and in Union-governed enterprises."

A report on the results of the poll on 3 March was also adopted today. The opposition, while not refuting the figures of the central commission, remained dissatisfied with the explanations regarding various violations.

Circumstances Surrounding Latvian Poll Criticized

PM0603153191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 2 Mar 91 Union Edition p 4

[Correspondent I. Litvinova report: "Latvia: Questions Before Poll"]

[Text] Very little time is left before the republic poll in which the inhabitants of Latvia will have to answer the question: "Are you 'for' a democratic and independent Latvian state?" Precincts have already been opened for those unable to vote 3 March.

However, to make a correct decision, the inhabitants need to get the answers to many questions that have recently accumulated. For example, how to describe and assess the hastily adopted changes in the election law which preclude military, Ministry of Internal Affairs, and KGB personnel from participating in the poll? After all, we are not talking about some sort of favorites in the republic but about those who have a permanent residence permit and who have been living in Latvia for years. Knowing that, in accordance with the country's legal norms, these citizens do not have passports but identity cards instead, the Latvian parliament has nevertheless required that only passports can be presented at an electoral precinct. Is that democratic? Even 11 republic Supreme Soviet deputies have found themselves in the position of being disfranchised. It is not surprising that the minority faction, which includes the "deputies without passports," issued a protest statement: "We reserve the right not to participate in the poll." Minority leader Sergey Dimanis thinks that by this device alone the right to vote has been taken away from tens of thousands of people. For this reason he has cast doubt on the poll results as well as the objectivity of the invited foreign observers, who should certainly pay attention to the mass discrimination against citizens.

The "Ravnopraviye" ["Equality"] faction has also criticized the question that has been put to the vote, considering that the wording excludes the possibility of choice: "Is it really possible to say 'no' to freedom and democracy?.. No. But does democracy really conflict with a union of free republics?"

Judging by Latvian television broadcasts and publications in the press which is linked with the People's Front, even now there can be no doubt about the poll results: Everyone is "for." With few exceptions.

Let's hear just one opinion "for" and one "against" (cited by a local youth newspaper):

Yuriy Tarabanov, cooperative member:

"I support the idea of holding a poll. I will be voting for independence, and all my family, of course, will do the same."

Georgiy Potlov, design engineer:

"The poll is unnecessary. The Latvian Government and the people understand democracy in different ways. Now democracy and independence are incompatible! Our Supreme Soviet wants to acquire a trump card in the struggle with the Union!"

An appraisal of the situation by sociologists is interesting in the light of the latter reply. Thus, the "Sotsioniks" Association held an eve-of-poll poll: What do the people at nine Riga enterprises think about today's most important problems? Some 58.6 percent of Latvians and 89 percent of non-Latvians thought it necessary to hold an all-Union referendum in Latvia on preserving the USSR. Some 62.6 percent of Latvians and 93.6 percent of non-Latvians see the very preservation of the Union as a guarantee of the rights and freedoms of people of any nationality. There was also a question in the sociological poll about the 3 March event: "What do you think of the question 'Do you support the restoration of an independent and democratic Latvia?'" The question was considered right and proper by 36.4 percent of Latvians and 5.6 percent of non-Latvians polled. Most of those polled—38.1 percent of Latvians and 58.7 percent of non-Latvians—chose the following answer option: It is unlawful, because one thing is being proclaimed while something else is being done."

The same viewpoint is also held by the authorized representatives of one of the recent candidates for Riga City Soviet deputy: V. Leonov, V. Safonov, N. Semizorov, V. Shumilo, and N. Veselova. The NOVOSTI RIGI [RIGA NEWS] newspaper published an open letter from them entitled "There Are No Democratic Choices in Latvia." The authorized representatives gave an account of infringements of the law during the election of their candidate.

All of this constitutes the most flagrant infringements of the election law, infringements that must be penalized above all by annulling the results. But the people who are duty-bound to protect the law have not done so. Just as on a previous occasion they failed to ask about infringements during an earlier election campaign. There marched into power under the banners of democracy also those who then started to trample on this democracy with their every successive step.

And finally, the very latest news. Again, unfortunately, about a discriminatory trend. In the last days before the start of the poll protests have started to arrive at electoral commissions and the Supreme Soviet: Unsuitable people are being kicked off the commissions and loyal People's Front people are being appointed in their places.

In a word, there are more questions than answers. But the main answer has to be given 17 March. Despite the authorities' opposition, many citizens of the republic want to take part in the all-Union referendum.

Latvia's Gorbunovs on Nordic Council Meeting

LD0503215291 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1630 GMT 5 Mar 91

[Text] Aid for the Baltic republics from the Nordic Council has been defined as a top priority. This was reported today by Gorbunovs, chairman of the Latvian Supreme Council. He made a speech at a session of the republic's legislature in Riga, informing them about his participation in the 39th session of this north European consultative body. The head of the republic's legislature noted the desire of the governments of the Nordic countries to participate in resolving the Baltic issue. Gorbunovs identified as the start of the process the recognition of Latvia's state independence, which was in the protocol on cooperation prepared during the work of the session by representatives from Denmark.

Nordic Council Membership for Baltics Rejected

PM0603161391 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 5 Mar 91 Second Edition p 5

[Correspondent Yu. Kuznetsov report: "The Prevalent Opinion... Nordic Council Week"]

[Text] Helsinki, 4 Mar—Virtually the whole of last week in Copenhagen took place against the background of the work of the Nordic Council. The latest, 39th, session of this Nordic consultative organ discussed a number of significant questions, including questions linked with developing European integration.

The prevalent opinion among the countries of Northern Europe is that they (apart from Denmark, which has long been a member of the Common Market) should conduct talks via "their" organization—the European Free Trade Association. The relevant documents are now in preparation.

As already pointed out, from the very outset the Nordic Council session was appreciably tilted "toward the Baltic." Its participants discussed extremely keenly the situation in the three Baltic republics. During the special recess declared between the official sittings Baltic representatives were given an opportunity to address the session's participants (outside its formal framework). They all proposed, in particular, "internationalizing" the question of the Baltic and expressed hope that Nordic Council members would step up their aid and support for these countries.

Some of the session's participants (primarily deputies from the so-called Danish and Norwegian populist parties) demanded that Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania be admitted to...the Nordic Council, but this opinion won no support at the session and the overwhelming majority of its participants considered the proposal quite unacceptable.

At one news conference Lithuanian Vice President B. Kuzmickas suggested holding the next session of the Nordic Council in one of the Baltic countries' capitals. Commenting on this suggestion, Finland's HUFVUDSTADSBLADET writes: "The Lithuanians might be said to be taking their familiar track which is by no means realistic." Moreover, the Finnish newspaper points out, neither the Estonian nor the Latvian presidents, who attended the session, supported his proposal either.

Latvia Takes Control of Public Order Units

LD0603101291 Riga International Service in Latvian 2030 GMT 5 Mar 91

[Text] In accordance with an instruction from the Government of Latvia, the headquarters of Latvia's voluntary public order guard units has been abolished. Its functions, staff units, and stock have been transferred to the newly formed public security department. Thus the existing multi-layer public order protection structure is being put in order and is being subjected to government control.

Especially during the tense time of the January events, but also before that, several such structures have arisen in the republic uniting the supporters of Latvia's independence. Now these are being combined, granting [to them] the status of a state service.

Investigators Examine 20 Jan Events in Riga

LD0503031591 Moscow Central Television Vostok Program and Orbita Networks in Russian 1530 GMT 4 Mar 91

[From the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] [Reporter Sergey Medvedev] Now, we report about the armed conflict that took place in Riga at the end of January. I refer to the exchange of fire near the Ministry of Internal Affairs building, which affected a journalist and two cameramen. The Union Procuracy is investigating this.

[V. Ye. Kostarev, senior investigator of serious cases in the USSR General Procuracy] The materials that have been gathered in regard to this case allow us to draw some preliminary conclusions. What are these conclusions linked to, first and foremost? The point is that investigation materials have established the fact that the special forces militia unit [OMON] passing the building were fired at. They did not open fire first. Apart from this, it was established that firing took place not only by the ministry building, the state building committee building, and the streets leading to them, as the mass media reports but also from a number of other places, including those in the OMON rear. The inquest has video material at its disposal that was filmed at the scene during these events, which testifies to the fact that OMON was fired at from the rear of Bastion Hill. This material was shown once on republican television and anyone could clearly see this. Apart from this, a number of citizens were killed or received bodily harm when they were in the vicinity of Bastion Hill. The location and type of wounds they received testifies to the fact that they were fired at from the rear.

[Correspondent O. Bobin] It looks like there was some other force.

[Kostarev] Yes. I would say even more. Prior to the exchange of fire, civilians armed with automatic weapons were noticed in a number of places, including those places where the fire came from later.

[Bobin] Sergey Ivanovich, we are receiving many letters about this from people who say that it is precisely with this exchange of fire that the case of the rape of an OMON worker is linked. Is such a link true?

[Sergey Ivanovich Gerasimov, assistant USSR procurator general] I see no direct link between the mentioned criminal cases. The seizure of a wife of one of the OMON workers...

[Bobin, interrupting] It really took place, did it not?

[Gerasimov] Yes, it was carried out by so-called law and order guards. That is why it would have been logical to expect that OMON would attack them and not militia workers. I can say that a criminal case was also begun on this regard by the procuracy of the Latvian Republic. In connection with the case of the rape of this woman, a criminal case was initiated by the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic.

[Bobin] Sergey Pavlovich, you are endowed with procurator's supervisory powers. Can you elaborate on how objectively this investigation is being conducted?

[Gerasimov] First and foremost, I must note that the investigation is constantly supervised by the USSR procuracy workers, the task of which is to ensure the objective and comprehensive investigation of the tragic events that took place.

[Medvedev] May I stress that these are preliminary conclusions of the procuracy.

Procurator Rejects USSR Investigation

LD0603172291 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1200 GMT 6 Mar 91

[From the "Television News Service" program]

[Text] [Announcer Dmitriy Kiselev] Skrastins, procurator general of the Latvian Republic, has declared that all the conclusions drawn by Kostyrev, head of the USSR procuracy investigation group, on the 20 January events in Riga are purely political and are at variance with the facts. The war of the procuracies, as we see, is continuing.

Reasons for Investigation Pondered

PM0503155191 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 27 Feb 91 Second Edition p 1

[Colonel M. Ziyeminsh report under the "Direct Line" rubric: "Who Needs the 'Coup' Topic"]

[Text] Riga—Latvia's Supreme Soviet has adopted an unusual resolution. Its text is contained within literally a single proposal: "For the purpose of investigating any possible participation by Latvian Republic people's deputies in the attempted coup d'etat in January 1991, the Latvian Republic Supreme Soviet resolves: To form a commission..."

This is followed by a list of eight deputies headed by M. Budovskis. It is equally typical that they all come from the majority faction, in other words the People's Front. There will probably be a major and possibly noisy investigation. Fine, but who are those actually suspected of participating in this "attempted coup d'etat?" Yes, these are the actual words used now in the republic to describe the January events in Riga. Despite the fact that an investigation of the seizure of the Ministry of Internal Affairs building by the Special Purpose Militia Unit and other instances involving the use of firearms in Riga's streets is far from complete, and specific conclusions have yet to be drawn.

And why, come to think of it, such a strange word collocation—"coup d'etat?" After all, everyone knows that there was no threat at all to either parliamentarians or even the parliament building in those January days.

The point is obvious: Someone still feels that relations with the All-Latvian Public Salvation Committee—a sociopolitical organization which proclaimed that it had taken all power in the republic in its own hands during the January days—have yet to be fully clarified. It is well known that this decision [by the committee] was legally groundless. But, when stating this universally known fact, someone had obviously calculated that the All-Latvian Public Salvation Committee itself would also end up being disbanded.

But the outcome was different in reality. The committee, in the person of its Cochairman A. Rubiks, Latvian parliamentary deputy and USSR people's deputy, not only failed to declare its self-dissolution but, on the contrary, announced that it will remain in existence and its scheduled congress will be held in the very near future. This is probably why someone would like to find "incriminating evidence" proving possible participation by individual deputies—like Rubiks himself, for example—in the "attempted coup d'etat." Especially since Rubiks is first secretary of the Latvian Communist Party Central Committee...

RSFSR

Russian Nationalities Chairman Supports Yeltsin

LD0603225891 Moscow TASS in English 2145 GMT 6 Mar 91

[By TASS parliamentary correspondents Lev Aksenov and Yuriy Kozmin]

[Text] Moscow March 7 TASS—Ramazan Abdulatipov, chairman of the Russian parliament's Council of Nationalities, in a TASS interview, has referred to the forthcoming Third Extraordinary Congress of Russia People's Deputies as the "last chance" to discontinue inter-party rivalry and unite in the name of taking Russia out of the critical state.

He believes that every deputy must reassess his or her stand so as to constructively cooperate with other political currents at the congress which begins on March 28, and not stick to confrontational attitudes.

The political statement issued on February 21 by a group of Russian parliament leaders "was not directed against parliament president Boris Yeltsin but was aimed at working out a unified policy of action prior to the congress," Abdulatipov emphasised.

He is one of the authors of that political statement. Eleven members of the parliament presidium are known to have condemned in press interviews the "statement of the six", describing it as a manifestation of "confrontational activity".

"Officially I consider myself a member of the Yeltsin team," Abdulatipov said. "Therefore, I must answer together with him for the work assigned to me".

In this connection he said that he will help the Russian parliament president to prepare an account of the work of the republican parliament leadership. This account will be one of the central items on the agenda of the forthcoming congress.

Unfortunately, Abdulatipov said, confrontational trends are so far stronger than striving for constructive work.

If the congress fails to find compromise solutions to the republic's pressing issues and ways to take the economy out of the critical state as soon as possible, "all deputies without exception, including the present leadership of the Russian parliament will have to resign," Abdulatipov said.

Polozkov Assails 'New Forces' Opponents

LD0603205991 Moscow TASS in English 2039 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow March 6 TASS—The joint plenary meeting of the Russian Communist Party Central Committee and Central Control Commission was held in Moscow on Wednesday. It was attended by the first secretaries of the republican, territorial, regional and areal party committees, who are not members of the party central committee and its central control commission, co-chairmen of the "Communists of Russia" deputy group, rectors of higher party schools, workers of army political bodies and journalists.

The central item on the agenda was tasks of communists in stabilizing the social and political situation in this Soviet largest republic.

The plenary meeting adopted an appeal of the Russian Communist Party's Central Committee and Central Control Commissions to peoples of the Russian Federation.

First Secretary of the Russian Communist Party Ivan Polozkov addressed the meeting. He criticised opponents from among new forces which have emerged on the political arena under perestroyka.

"The character of the latest development," he said, "makes one draw the conclusion that our recent assessment of the situation as confrontation of supporters of the socialist choice and of the restoration of capitalism, while remaining true on the whole, no longer fully reflects the essence of the current moment. We must raise our own awareness of the fact—and explain it, bring it home to the mind and heart of every individual—that the fate of our motherland has been called into question: will its thousand-year-old history continue?"

"The great world power," Polozkov said, "has found itself on the razor's edge between existence and nonexistence. There are people who want to dismember the country, turn it into several dozens of semi-colonies, a raw-material annex to economically-developed states, the supplier of cheap work force."

Polozkov Says CP 'Decisive Political Force'

PM0603141091 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 28 Feb 91 First Edition p 2

[TASS correspondent A. Kakovkin report: "Among the People—I.K. Polozkov's Trip to Ryazan Oblast"]

[Text] Ryazan—"How can we support the Russian peasant today and give him confidence in tomorrow when market prices rise inexorably and shortages are worsening? After all, without a revival of the countryside there can be no talk of reviving Russia either." This was how I.K. Polozkov, member of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo and first secretary of the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Communist Party Central Committee, explained to journalists his unusual decision to begin his tour of Ryazan Oblast with a trip to the "Yekimovskiy" Sovkhoz.

An experiment was conducted on this farm: It was suggested at a meeting that those wishing to transfer to private farming would be given the necessary help. But nobody wanted to. Because, thanks to the introduction here of scientifically founded systems for crop farming and stockraising, a high level of efficiency in agricultural production is regularly attained and the workers are guaranteed a good steady income. But there is something else which worries them—namely, the present chaos sweeping the country as regards the price of equipment, fertilizer, and other basic resources. For this reason, the sovkhoz has been left with practically nothing with which to find a solution to key social problems in the countryside, without which, incidentally, private farming will not succeed.

It is therefore highly necessary, I.K. Polozkov stressed, to put a stop as quickly as possible to confrontation, confusion, and the war of laws, and embark in harmony on a wise policy of socialist transformations, and first and foremost to start the price reform.

He inquired particularly about the progress of the preparations for the spring sowings; he visited the livestock units, and familiarized himself with the work of the cheesemaking shop that operates on the farm. Talks here were useful both for the guest and for the hosts. Having a good knowledge of agriculture, he was able to give a lot of useful advice on how to improve business.

At a meeting with the first secretary of the RSFSR Communist Party Central Committee in the Sovkhoz House of Culture, there was a lively discussion on the country's situation and the role and place of Russia's Communists in the search for effective ways to take the country out of the crisis. For example, in response to a question on the Communist Party's economic program, its leader said: "The main task for our primary organizations is to help implement measures proclaimed by the president to stabilize the country's situation. Communists are required to play an especially important role in the sphere of protecting working people from market forces. And there is another major aim—to prevent enterprises being transferred into private hands under the slogan of privatization and the selling off of state property. They must be put at the disposal of the labor collectives with the full right of ownership of the fruits of their labor.

"Russia's communists oppose the enforced degeneration of their party, the rejection of the socialist choice, and the vague phrases about the common good and the supremacy of common human interests. This must not disorient people or play into the hands of those who use discussion for one purpose only—to demoralize the party. Russia's revival is our foremost slogan, our political principle, and our strategy. We cannot but condemn B.N. Yeltsin's policy which aims to physically destroy the Union and encourages national-separatism and chauvinism. We cannot condone his showdown with the country's president.

"A whole barrage of slanderous comment is raining down on the Communist Party now. Meanwhile, it is forgotten that there are approximately 10 million individuals in the Communist Party. Anyone who thinks he can solve the country's problems without this decisive political force is at best either naive or deluding himself."

I.K. Polozkov took part in a joint plenum of the Ryazan CPSU Obkom [oblast committee] and the oblast party organization's Control and Auditing Committee. Apart from the fundamental question "On the Present Moment," the meeting also discussed an application by L.I. Khitrun, first secretary of the CPSU obkom and chairman of the oblast soviet of people's deputies, to retire. He was commissioned almost unanimously to continue as head of the oblast party organization, and his work was highly appraised.

Making no reference to any specific case, I.K. Polozkov announced that not all of our party cadres are standing their ground in today's critical and alarming period—some are wavering. Even though, in his opinion, there are no grounds for this. Ivan Kuzmich recalled how just a few days previously at an alternative rally on Moscow's Manezh Square, for example, there were banners bearing the slogan: "Communists, surrender, and your lives will be spared." But surrender to who, says the speaker—these few hundred bawlers who sold out long ago and who turn up again to protest by the "Moskva" Hotel, the "Rossiya" Hotel, and on Kalinin Prospekt? You know, Muscovites already know them by sight. They have no constructive ideas apart from one destructive cry—"Down With...!!" And the people have begun to understand who is who. In our country, as has always been the case with the sensible Japanese, for example, once again the slogan "Cadres Decide Everything!" must assume the most prominent place. However, we must also do everything to ensure that the cadres do not repeat past mistakes.

The first secretary of the RSFSR Communist Party Central Committee also spoke at the debates on the report, as well as at a press conference held to conclude his visit. It was made known that he intends to visit Novosibirsk Oblast in the next few days. Nowadays, I.K. Polozkov's notable political activeness has a number of ulterior motives—preparation for the 6 March RSFSR Communist Party Central Committee plenum, and of course the impending all-Union referendum—but there is no denying that his efforts to spend more time now among the people and to defend their flouted interests more firmly make him a worthy example to all communists.

Council of Ministers Takes Measures on Sales Tax

LD0603194191 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1600 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] In connection with the USSR president's decree on the introduction of sales tax and the relevant decision of the USSR Cabinet of Ministers, the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] Council of Ministers has elaborated a number of measures to protect the population from additional expenditure. The decision of the Russian Council of Ministers has established a list of goods and services which are not liable to the five percent sales tax within the territory of the RSFSR.

The Councils of Ministers of the republics within Russia, kray executive committees, oblast executive committees, the Moscow city and Leningrad city executive committees, and the executive committees of the soviets of people's deputies of autonomous oblast and okrugs are given the right to introduce additional benefits and to revoke the sales tax for individual consumer goods and services. Full lists of goods and services not liable to the five percent tax have been sent to all trading organizations of the Russian Federation.

RSFSR Central Commission Discusses Referendum

LD0703025991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1648 GMT 6 Mar 91

[By unidentified TASS correspondent]

[Text] Moscow, 6 Mar (TASS)—On the territory of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR], vigorous efforts are being undertaken for the successful holding of the Union and Russian referenda, it was stressed today at a meeting of the RSFSR central commission for holding the referenda. It was noted that in a number of regions, calls are being heard to boycott the republican referendum.

At the meeting, progress in preparations for holding the referendum in Krasnodar and Adygey districts was analyzed.

The commission took note of the information regarding "preparations for voting on the day of the RSFSR referendum on ships of the maritime, the fishing, and the expeditionary fleets, and also at polar and hydrometeorological stations and in other collectives located in remote places and places difficult to access."

A report was heard on the provision of district and ward commissions and on the readiness of the communications bodies for receiving and transmitting data on the progress and results of the voting in districts.

Kamchatka To Conduct Referendum 17 Mar

LD0603114691 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 0900 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] The Kamchatka Oblast Soviet Presidium has adopted a decision to conduct a referendum on 17 March. Apart from a ballot paper Union and Russia-related questions, residents of the peninsula are to reply to another one: Do you support an appeal to the USSR Supreme Soviet for restriction on the immigration of citizens to Kamchatka? As is known, the decision to make Kamchatka open was adopted by the USSR Council of Ministers on 27 November 1990. As the SOYUZINFORM agency asserts, the decision was adopted without consultation with local authorities, and met with a negative reaction from the majority of the obalst's residents. The main argument is that Kamchatka has to import virtually everything and represents an extremely vulnerable ecological system. In the event of it being opened up, the living standards of the peninsula's population could deteriorate.

Tatarstan Rejects Russian Referendum

LD0603184291 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1300 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] The Tatarstan Supreme Soviet Presidium has resolved not to hold the Russian referendum on the republic's territory. At the same time, the possibility of boycotting the all-Union referendum was discussed at the conference of the Kazan administration of the Democratic Party of Russia, should the Russian referendum not be held in Tatarstan. This has been reported by the POSTFAKTUM agency.

Smolensk Oblast Rejects Referendum

91UN0969B Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 27 Feb 91 First Edition p 1

[Article by SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA special correspondent N. Garifullina: "Alarmed Over the Fate of Fatherland: Smolensk Oblast People's Deputies Soviet Decides Not To Hold RSFSR Referendum on Oblast Territory"]

[Text] Smolensk, 25 February—At its extraordinary session on 22 February, Smolensk Oblast Soviet of People's Deputies decided not to hold the RSFSR referendum on oblast territory. During the second session, at which this decision was made, 106 out of 124 deputies were present. During the roll call vote, 80 deputies were for the decision, and 26 against.

FROM THE OBLAST SOVIET DECISION:

—To charge the presidium, oblast soviet executive committee, and the soviets of people's deputies of the city, rayons, and rural settlements with conducting the necessary organizational work in preparation for, and in implementation of, the USSR referendum on 17 March, 1991, on the entire oblast territory.

—To recommend to public organizations, workers collectives, and the mass media to provide, in a form easily understandable for all strata of the population, a comprehensive and objective interpretation of the substance of the question presented at the USSR referendum, the voting procedures, as well as the historic importance of this decision in country's critical time.

—Considering the incorrect wording of the questions regarding the peoples of Russia, and their obviously ambiguous meaning, which ensures in advance a loose interpretation of the results of the vote, to not conduct the RSFSR referendum on oblast territory.

—The oblast soviet of people's deputies calls for the unity of all Smolensk residents, and appeals to all citizens of the Russian Federation who hold dear the honor, dignity, and independence of the Fatherland, to display honesty and firmness, self-possession and common sense, and, on the day of the national referendum initiated by the USSR Supreme Soviet, to take upon themselves a special responsibility for the destiny of our multinational state, and to make a conscious choice in favor of the USSR as a renewed federation.

An Unexpected Afterword to the Session Decision

So many things have happened in the two days since that moment when 80 deputies of the Smolensk Oblast Soviet voted to cancel the RSFSR referendum on oblast territory, that one could write a drama entitled "48 Hours in the Life of the Chairman." In any case, from the moment I arrived in Smolensk yesterday, I heard strange talk that, ostensibly, one of the speakers at the local "democrats" rally in the Park imeni 1100-letiya Smolenska informed shaken listeners that R.I. Khasbulatov, first deputy chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, was immediately sending here a sort of a procurator, to investigate "illegal actions" by the oblast soviet chairman.

I did some research. It turns out that yes, there was a rally in the park on Sunday, and one of the speakers was one V.G. Yudenkov, member of Democratic Russia movement, who said, among other things:

"The latest brief information received from Sergey Aleksandrovich Filatov, head of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet Presidium Secretariat: Khasbulatov, deputy chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, summoned Smolensk Oblast Soviet Chairman Mamontov to the Supreme Soviet to testify on the illegal decision of the Smolensk Oblast Soviet session on 22 February in regard to Smolensk Oblast's refusal to participate in the Russian referendum, since this decision violates the RSFSR Constitution, and he is sending procurators to Smolensk City...

"Leonid Vasilyevich," I asked L.V. Mamontov, "can you explain what happened, and how close the rumors are to the truth?"

"Here is, in essence, what happened. On Saturday I received a call from the head of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet organization department, who asked me to get in touch with Khasbulatov. 'What have you adopted there, what issues were discussed?' asked Ruslan Imranovich. I named the issue of the USSR and RSFSR referendum, and the second one—Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin's television interview. The third one was a small, specific issue about the right of the oblast soviet presidium to bring in specialists to consult and prepare drafts of the sessions' decisions. 'And what have you adopted?' asked Khasbulatov. We adopted, I said, a decision to do all the necessary work related to participation in the USSR referendum, and decided not to participate in the RSFSR referendum, since the questions it contains are incorrect, they leave open the opportunity to interpret the results of the vote freely in any direction. Eighty deputies out of 106 spoke against the referendum.... And then there was this dialogue:

"'I had a look at your biography,' said Khasbulatov. 'Well,' I said, 'thank you.' 'I see that you are able to influence the deputies.' 'I am just another deputy, the same as others; I have the same rights as they do.... I cannot reverse the decision of the session....' I promised that we would have a meeting of the presidium and discuss this matter with the chairmen of the city and rayon soviets.... By the way, I can tell you that we had this meeting this morning, and they fully support the decision of the oblast soviet session. But Ruslan Imranovich warned me: 'Unless you send a telegram that the decision of the session has been reconsidered, you are to be present on Monday at 15:00 at the presidium. We will fire you and disband your soviet.' 'Well,' I said, 'you can try!'

"This is what kind of conversation we had. Therefore today at 1030 we are conducting a meeting of the oblast soviet presidium where I, probably, will inform the deputies of last Saturday's call from the first deputy chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, especially in light of the fact that our "democrats" have already learned about it, and they announced it publicly at the rally last Sunday. There are all kinds of rumors, people are alarmed, they call to the oblast soviet."

"Leonid Vasilyevich, do you think your decision is legal?"

"If we are talking about the first question—the Russian Federation referendum—then, on the one hand, how can one refuse to vote for self-sufficiency and independence, that is, for Russian sovereignty; but, on the other hand, the Russian referendum is in conflict with the Union referendum—after all, it does not contain any references to the socialist nature of our federation and it is not at all clear where we will all end up. The entity that was established on this huge territory is not our achievement, but that of former generations. History is the witness: Nobody pushed Bohdan Khmelnitskiy, or the same Georgians, or any other peoples, under the wing of the Russian people; they themselves asked to be taken into the Union. And now, all of a sudden, we will just turn around and destroy it all? As to the presidency, I think, we should first adopt a constitution and determine the form of government, whether it be a monarchy or a republic, and only then decide whether or not there should be a president.

"I think we will send a telegram to the Supreme Soviet Presidium, if that is necessary, and we will ask our Supreme Soviet deputies to be present at the presidium.... Or is it time for our entire session to visit Moscow?" sadly jokes Leonid Vasilyevich.

...RSFSR Supreme Soviet deputies from Smolensk Oblast came to the meeting of the oblast soviet presidium. And why not: The question on the agenda was to discuss the recommendation (this is the way the oblast soviet chairman softened Khasbulatov's ultimatum) to reconsider the decision of the extraordinary session of the oblast soviet on the Russian referendum. Leonid Vasilyevich briefed the colleagues on the Saturday call from the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, and asked them to express their own point of view on the decision and on the situation that had developed. To call for a session or not to call, to reconsider the session decision or not to reconsider. He also informed them of the opinion of the chairmen of the city and rayon soviets, a meeting with whom had taken place in the same oblast soviet building a little earlier. Their opinion was this: They support the session decision; by the way, there is a decision by the Roslavl City Soviet that is similar to the decision of the oblast soviet of people's deputies.

Getting ahead of myself, I can say that out of 20 people who spoke at the oblast soviet presidium session only two expressed some doubt about the decision. The rest of the presidium, and the RSFSR people's deputies, underscored again and again: The session decision is legal, and nobody has the right to reverse it. In making this decision, the deputies showed civic maturity and high morals.

"I do not want to be a mere pawn," said A.Ye. Glushenko, director of the Smolensk Refrigerator Plant. "If we conduct this Russian referendum, it may turn out in the end that Russia separates from the Union... I voted for the decision we have taken, and I am convinced that it is a right decision."

"I do not understand why we have to offer any justifications. The wording of the Russian referendum is muddled, the president's functions are not defined; therefore, taking this issue to the referendum is premature," this is the convinced opinion of A.I. Shkalov, general director of the Kristall industrial amalgamation.

Having exchanged opinions, members of the oblast soviet presidium decided on this text for the telegram:

Moscow, RSFSR Supreme Soviet.

The presidium of the Smolensk Oblast Soviet of People's Deputies has considered the recommendation of Comrade R.I. Khasbulatov, first deputy chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, to reconsider the decision of the fifth session of the oblast soviet on the RSFSR referendum, said decision having stated the impossibility of conducting the referendum in the oblast for reasons of the incorrect wording of the question and the possibility for arbitrary interpretation of its results, which goes against the current USSR and RSFSR Constitutions.

In adopting this decision at the session, we followed Article 9 of the Law on RSFSR Referendum, which says that the right to make decisions on the referendum rests with the Congress of RSFSR People's Deputies, and in the interval between the congresses—to the RSFSR Supreme Soviet.

If the RSFSR Supreme Soviet adopts a decision to conduct a referendum on RSFSR territory, the oblast soviet presidium will suggest that the oblast soviet session consider the question of participation in the referendum.

[Signed] On behalf of the presidium members, V. Yermolenko, deputy chairman of the Oblast City Soviet.

From ancient times the Smolensk land has been Russia's shield; she was the first one to warn people of impending calamity. There is a reason why the ancient crest of Smolensk Oblast has the image of an unknown magical bird from folk fairy tales. It is the Gamayun, the prophet bird, the symbol of the land of Smolensk. Today this land is true to its heritage. Just recently the oblast soviet expressed, at its fourth session, the concern of Smolensk residents in regard to increased economic and sociopolitical tensions in the country, and the disruption of economic links, which reduces the supply of food and industrial consumer goods to the population and brings down the standard of living in general, resulting in the people losing faith in tomorrow. On the basis of this, the oblast soviet proposed that the RSFSR Supreme Soviet call an extraordinary Congress of RSFSR People's Deputies, with the Supreme Soviet leadership report on the congress agenda. Their voice has been heard and supported. And now Smolensk citizens, alarmed over the Fatherland's destiny, again, like the prophet bird Gamayun in ancient times, warn the people of Russia of the threatening calamity. Listen to their voice, citizens of Russia!

Legality of RSFSR Referendum Questioned

PM0503145591 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 2 Mar 91 First Edition p 1

["Contrary to Our Own Laws. Statement by RSFSR People's Deputies"—SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA headline]

[Text] A nationwide referendum on a question concerning the future of the entire USSR will be held in the country 17 March 1991.

A resolution by the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Supreme Soviet dated 7 February 1991 proclaimed the holding of an RSFSR referendum the same day. At first glance, the decision to hold a referendum in the RSFSR is justified. First, holding the USSR and RSFSR referendums the same day will save considerable material resources and will facilitate the organization of the referendum.

Second, the actual fact of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet's proclamation of an all-Russia referendum is lawful. In essence, however, the resolution adopted by the RSFSR Supreme Soviet contains breaches of provisions of the RSFSR Constitution and the Law on Referendums in the RSFSR.

These breaches are as follows:

First. The 7 February 1991 RSFSR Supreme Soviet resolution "On Measures to Ensure the Holding of the USSR Referendum and the RSFSR Referendum 17 March 1991" does not specify the questions being submitted to referendum.

Meanwhile, according to Articles 16 and 17 of the RSFSR Law "On Referendums in the RSFSR", a precise formulation of the referendum questions is a necessary condition even for a civic initiative to hold a referendum. The meaning and contents of the aforementioned law make it clear that a decision to schedule a referendum cannot be legally effective if it does not contain the main point—the questions on which the referendum is being held.

Second. By virtue of its 7 February 1991 resolution, the RSFSR Supreme Soviet empowered the RSFSR Central Commission for Holding the Referendums to include two questions on the ballot paper. These instructions are in breach of Article 22 of the RSFSR Law "On Referendums in the RSFSR" which does not give the Central Commission the power to resolve such questions.

Third. The RSFSR Supreme Soviet Presidium's interference in the process of determining the questions being submitted to the referendum is unlawful. According to Article 144, point 6 of the RSFSR Constitution, the Presidium "organizes the preparation and holding of referendums." And that is all! But on 21 February 1991 the RSFSR Supreme Soviet Presidium, without any legal grounds, promulgated resolution No. 680-1 on deleting one of the questions. Thus, by virtue of its resolution, the

Presidium repealed point 8 of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet resolution, which is impermissible.

Fourth. The result of the legal confusion and the series of procedural breaches when determining the questions to be submitted to the all-Russia referendum was that now it is no longer possible to comply with the time limit for holding the referendum as laid down in Article 19 of the Law "On Referendums in the RSFSR." In compliance with this article, a referendum cannot be held less than one month following the day when the resolution to hold it was adopted. The RSFSR Central Commission for Holding the USSR and RSFSR Referendums adopted the final resolution on the questions to be submitted to the nationwide vote only 26 February, in other words 20 days prior to the scheduled date for the referendum.

The breaches of legality which have been committed have created prerequisites for thwarting the referendum. Several soviets of people's deputies have already announced that the RSFSR referendum will not be held on their territories.

Disregard for legislatively established procedures for holding a referendum means that its results cannot have any legal effect, while the actual action of holding the RSFSR referendum will only lead to further deepening of the political crisis and a split of the multinational Russian people.

The RSFSR Supreme Soviet has still not defined, in compliance with the Second Congress of RSFSR People's Deputies resolution, the range of powers vested in the RSFSR president to be elected by a nationwide vote, but the people are already being asked to make their choice.

The RSFSR Supreme Soviet Presidium's proclamation of an all-Russia referendum 17 March on the introduction of the post of RSFSR president to be elected by a nationwide vote is antinconstitutional and must be repealed, or the results of the referendum to be held can be considered only an expression of public opinion on this question.

The statement has been signed by the following RSFSR people's deputies:

V.A. Bokov, No. 58 National-Territorial District; O.A. Boriskin, No. 496 Territorial District; V.A. Vyucheyskiy, No. 162 National-Territorial District; S.A. Glotov, No. 163 Territorial District; M.M. Zakharov, No. 684 Territorial District; A.I. Ilyenkov, No. 42 National-Territorial District; R.Z. Kadyrov, No. 588 Territorial District; L.N. Kushnarev, No. 413 Territorial District; S.A. Osminin, No. 453 Territorial District; A.A. Ponomarev, No. 690 Territorial District; V.I. Sevastyanov, No. 73 National-Territorial District; I.N. Smirnov, No. 133 Territorial District; V.S. Sokolov, No. 206 Territorial District; U.Ye. Temirov, No. 155 National-Territorial District; V.V. Uvachan, No. 157 National-Territorial District; Yu.K. Chapkovskiy, No. 254 Territorial District; A. Ye. Shevtsov, No. 688 Territorial District; M.I. Ettyryntyna, No. 156 National-Territorial District.

Najibullah Receives Russian Legislators

LD0303230291 Moscow TASS in English 2001 GMT 3 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent German Baykov]

[Text] Kabul March 3 TASS—For 70 years relations between the Soviet Union and Afghanistan have been relations of friendship and cooperation, President Najibullah recalled, speaking to members of the delegation from the parliament of the Russian Republic, headed by deputy chairman of the Russian Parliament Boris Isayev. The delegation is visiting Kabul to attend the celebrations of an anniversary of the signing of the treaty to establish friendly relations between the Russian Federation and Afghanistan.

Najubullah expressed heartfelt gratitude for the assistance the Soviet Union rendered and continued to render to Afghanistan.

"After Afghanistan proclaimed the national reconciliation policy," Najibullah said, "we began to view the development of cooperation between our two countries in a new light. We believe that mutual benefit must be the central principle of our relationship and there are good opportunities for this.

"Our entrepreneurs are ready to invest in a variety of projects on Soviet territory, and establish joint ventures. Besides, the Afghan market is ready to receive Soviet manufactured goods.

"I hope," the Afghan president said, "that peace will soon be established in our country and we shall be able to use the immense potential of our cooperation".

The Afghan leader characterized the situation in the country as quiet, excepting some provinces neighboring on Pakistan. The rebels have lost the possibility of launching offensives.

"We have information that the opposition is preparing for the spring-and-summer military campaign, but according to our estimates, it will be the last breath," Najibullah stressed.

Boris Isayev spoke during the meeting about social and political processes under way in the Soviet Union and problems tackled by the Russian parliament.

He voiced "support for continued assistance to Afghanistan and the development of direct links between regions, territories and individual enterprises and Afghan partners.

The leader of the delegation from the Russian parliament thanked the leadership of the Afghan Republic for the hospitality and hearty welcome.

KGB Staffers Reject Yeltsin Guard Claims

PM0403110091 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 26 Feb 91 First Edition p 6

[Article by V. Borisenko and N. Maklakov of the USSR KGB Guard Service: "What the Men in the Mercedes Are Worrying About; Why Fabricated Stories About Attempts on B.N. Yeltsin's Life Are Being Disseminated"]

[Text] Publications have recently appeared in the mass media which give detailed accounts of the difficult work of staffers of the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Supreme Soviet Chairman's Security Department. We should rejoice at our fellow professionals becoming the subject of such close attention in KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA, NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA, KURANTY, Leningrad Television, and many other organs. After all, behind this attention lies a recognition of the difficulties encountered by people working in the republic leadership's guard. However, this feeling of joy is tempered by a bitterness about our colleagues for, to put it mildly, the lack of objectivity and liberty they allow themselves in contacts with journalists.

Judge for yourselves. The news agency POSTFAKTUM posed the following question to A. Korzhakov, chief of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet Chairman's Security Department: "Does the USSR KGB assist you?" The reply was laconic, to say the least: "No, that has not happened." But allow me to suggest that surely the KGB's placing of five GAZ-31013 cars at the disposal of the Russian Federation's leadership, and of a bullet-proof Mercedes-Benz 500T for B.N. Yeltsin's personal use, constitutes concrete assistance for the recently formed security department? Its leaders also do not consider the security warning devices, which came free with the state-owned detached house on the Lenin Hills and the state-owned dacha in the Moscow region, to be a quid pro quo. In A. Korzhakov's opinion the transfer, at the request of the republic's leaders, of USSR KGB personnel, even including a cook, to the security department, apparently does not constitute assistance.

While ignoring the obvious, the department's leaders are trying their best to stir up passions over the KGB's activities. So here they are, making momentous statements on our television screens and in the pages of the newspapers about the "constant attention paid to them by the KGB," then going further by spreading this assumption around the whole Russian parliament. The apotheosis of this campaign was security department head A. Korzhakov's extremely rousing statement to NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA: "Through party structures and using operational and technical devices, the USSR KGB is carrying out a campaign to discredit the RSFSR's democratic movements, first and foremost its leaders." Further on he says: "We should all remember: In all ages it was only conspirators who went in for discrediting and undermining the lawfully elected authorities." To convince us, he adduces the "sensational revelation" of the existence of a room containing a listening device in the Russian Supreme Soviet building. Then there follows a "brilliant" technical conclusion about the "the dual purpose of the apparatus that was found, both for listening and to prevent it."

The KGB's position in this matter was expounded in the mass media, and it is up to the USSR Prosecutor's Office to give a judicial evaluation of such statements.

However, the recent events prove convincingly that "spy mania" is captivating the minds of the representatives of "the country's first independent secret service" more and more. How else can you explain the accusation that the KGB's party organizations are conducting a campaign to discredit the RSFSR's democratic movements, moreover using technical devices. It was simpler to present the absence of keys to the notorious room 420 as a complex KGB operation than to admit the housekeepers' negligence. And if a person goes to work for the state security organs, this is the natural reward for having collaborated with them for a long time.

The development of events is painfully familiar. Remember that the famous road traffic accident in which, apart from B.N. Yeltsin, other people were also injured, was passed off as an attempt on his life. Though the specialists' point of view was unequivocal—there had been a serious infringement of traffic regulations. Even now the State Automobile Inspection staffers say in a troubled manner that if the cars of the Russian parliament's leader and his guard continue to drive in accordance with their "own rules," then a further calamity is not far off.

Another thing is also surprising. The security department's leaders are continually serving up the abovementioned newspapers' gullible readers with a mixture of half-truth and blatant fantasy, couching it in meaningful phrases like "according to our information" or "according to information from our sources," and directly emphasizing their own significance (just look at our men!) by an admission of their carrying out strategic work against one of the KGB's subunits.

This device is brought into play to prove the presence of bulletproof Mercedes cars in the KGB subunit in question, and their "insufficiently efficient utilization." Yet thousands of Muscovites have observed these motor vehicles on more than one occasion, during visits to the capital by high-ranking delegations from abroad. Only recently, they must have seen them on the streets of Moscow during the visits of President No Tae-u of the Republic of Korea, T. 'Aziz, personal representative of the Iraqi president, and others. Respected readers, don't be surprised if tomorrow a report is confided to you on a meat grinder found in the RSFSR Supreme Soviet's cafeteria, which, as a result of its "dual" function, is used by the KGB as an instrument of medieval torture. In order to elicit a feeling of sympathy, they will palm you off with some point about the "obstacles" security department staffers encounter, in particular when they "sign applications in the offices of several Kremlin generals." But here they will studiously avoid the actual content of these applications, which demand the issue of passes for several dozen armed staffers to the Kremlin Palace when Congresses of USSR People's Deputies are at work. Naturally, they will shamelessly omit those examples of boorish behavior perpetrated against staffers of the USSR KGB guard service. They will take pains to convince you that "Gorbachev is guarded by several thousand men, whereas Yeltsin is guarded by only several dozen." Though in actual fact the size of the USSR presidential guard department is much smaller than that of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet Chairman's Security Department. According to recruiters in the security department, the salary there is much higher. But this is really a matter for Russian parliamentarians, as is the question of the basis on which security department staffers "just went and solved the problem of arms," and whether the armed formation is legal.

It is difficult to find a black cat in a dark room, and still harder when it isn't there. And if anyone likes this pursuit, let them search. But USSR KGB guard staffers do not understand very well why the security department leaders have to bring in an element of strain into relations between our subunits. After all, we are talking about teamwork.

February Rallies in Moscow Viewed

91UN0966A Moscow RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA in Russian 26 Feb 91 p 3

[Article by Viktor Yurlov: "Two Against One"]

[Text] Moscow—*The end of last week was marked by a furious storm of political frenzy. On Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, the walls of the ancient Kremlin shuddered from the wailing in unison of hundreds of thousands of voices of people aroused to a state of savagery.*

As its organizers declared, the first rally was devoted to glasnost and democracy. The obvious refutation of its motto were the sharp salesmen of numerous newspapers of various sizes and shapes, leaflets and banners which contained, it seemed, all imaginable and unimaginable slogans conceived by mankind from the ancient Roman times until the appearance in the historical arena of the Zelenograders who aroused the imaginations of their compatriots with their despairing devotion to yesterday's guardians of law and order.

Those participating in the rally were demanding essentially the shutdown of the communist press, which in Moscow is represented by four or five of the hundreds of publications, the majority of which Muscovites could never get used to. Apparently, freedom of the press, in the understanding of the leaders of the rally, insists in eliminating these publications that are not afraid to defend their banner, even if they are left in the minority.

Incidentally, this rally was like a rehearsal for Sunday, which took place right here on Manezhnaya Square. I will not try to calculate how many people gathered there because I will lose count, but I can say quite definitely that there were several hundred thousand and perhaps a half million. I must keep this clearly in mind because many of them, and maybe the majority, are active advocates of forced changes in the country, beginning with political views and ending with power structures.

Here is just one example. Telman Gdlyan, who gets top billing at all such measures, who engaged in ferocious criticism of party apparatchiks and suggested taking the president to court, shouted: "Who is in favor of making Gorbachev retire immediately; I call for a vote!" In response there was a forest of hands. One person dared to speak out against the idea. Even Gdlyan condescendingly congratulated this brave soul for his courage.

I understand that people gather at rallies in democratic countries in order to have the opportunity to express themselves freely on any subject and still be protected by the law. Nobody is insured against criticism—even the head of state. This is fair. But it is hardly fair when from the center of the capital of a great power one hears words like "criminals," "lackeys," and so forth and there is no response to them.

So this rally on Sunday, organized in defense of B.N. Yeltsin, took place. It took place in the sense that this time their positions were not revealed or clearly formulated. I will give a couple of statements from the dictaphone recording.

Oleg Rumyantsev, RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] people's deputy: "Today we are accusing the Union authorities, the authorities of the center, of betraying the state. When referred to the president's retirement, the following was behind it. The Russian Federation must take the initiative at the next Congress of People's Deputies to abolish the post of USSR president, change the Constitution..."

Here are the appeals of the "people's deputy from Petersburg," as the chairman introduced him: "Today the question is put point blank: Who is on top? Strong resistance has started. The time of compromise, the time of universal consolidation, has passed. The time has come for unification of radical leftists who are prepared for a decisive struggle. Today the watershed passes through each labor collective, through each local soviet, even through many families. A historic question is being decided: Who will win? We must break the back of the CPSU! We must destroy the 70-year-old empire held together at the point of a bayonet."

With rare exceptions it was all in this same spirit. Perhaps this candor comes from their being aware of their power? It is more likely the opposite; confusion has entered the ranks of the anticommunists. Here is the admission of USSR People's Deputy Oleg Borodin: "I just arrived from Yakutia. Taking advantage of the fact that the program of lies "Vremya," as well as PRAVDA and IZVESTIYA reach there, they have begun to attack Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin. I suggest that all participants in the rally who have friends and relatives living in the most remote outskirts of our large country write the truth about this rally, that they write it in spite of the reports that will be shown on central television. This is a way in which we can make our contribution to Yeltsin's defense."

The latest appeal is essentially nothing other than a recognition of the sharply declining popularity of the chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet. And this is understandable. The people are tired of confrontation, the people are demanding order, and the Russian leader and the anticommunists surrounding him are continuing to break down the foundations of the many-century-old state.

A rally is always against something. Even if it is convened in support of something. This was the case with the rally held in between the two previously mentioned. It was the rally held on 23 February on the anniversary of the Soviet Army and Navy. Its initiators were the deputy groups Soyuz and Moskva, veteran youth organizations, and other social organizations. The purpose of the rally was to pay honor to present and past defenders of the homeland and to show respect for those who today are continuing the heroic traditions of the Soviet Army and safeguarding the security of the homeland. Both the people speaking from the podium and the slogans the rally participants brought here told of the fact that people are in favor of a renewed but whole Union, civil peace and harmony, and further stabilization and democratization of the society.

That was their "boring" set of goals. Not so for the anticommunists. Every slogan hits the nail on the head and every quotation hits the bullseye. They come down hard. For example, "Red shit, hands off Yeltsin!" Nicely, elegantly put.

This is what caught our attention. And this was perhaps the main thing in the rallies that were conducted. The anticommunists have learned to handle large crowds. That is certain. When the leader in a hoarse voice asked the masses of many thousands to take 20 steps backward or asked the group on the right to move up Tverskaya, the crowd obeyed without question. At that time it occurred to me that they might be having drill training for anticommunists. If they were to do a little more of that kind of work with the crowd, it could become a military column that would go wherever it wanted and destroy whatever it wanted to. This must not be allowed.

And so, two rallies against one. No, this is not arithmetic and it means something altogether different. Do you know how it is with the hooligans? When one on one they have neither enough strength nor enough courage they band together in gangs. I am far from the idea of comparing hundreds of thousands of Muscovites who participated in the rallies "for company" with this disrespectful rabble. That was only a literary trope, a nicety, and nothing more. My apologies, just in case.

Commission Fails To Clarify 'Bugging' Case

PM0603115691 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 2 Mar 91 p 1

["Own information" report: "The Disclosure Has Shown That the Problem Died With the Disclosure..."]

[Text] The Russian legislature yesterday heard the preliminary findings of the work of the commission formed on 7 February to clarify the circumstances in the matter of the discovery of a "device of unknown purpose" in room 4-120 of the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Supreme Soviet. Experts whose services the Russian legislature's security service enlisted claim that the device from the room (to which nobody had the keys), could be used equally for preventing I. Silayev and B. Yeltsin's office from being bugged, as for bugging it. The scandal has acquired the name "Presnya-Gate" in the press. In its statement the USSR KGB angrily repudiated all accusations.

The commission effectively did not answer a single question in its feeble report. There was no examination of the device, nor were its possible applications explained. It is very amusing that the commission's chairman himself proposed that it be dissolved in spite of the preliminary nature of its findings. Ruslan Khasbulatov supported him, though he had stated a minute earlier: "From this it is clear that nothing is clear." And he was right. Essentially, the commission confirmed the USSR KGB's conclusion that the device could not be used as a listening device, but hinted that under certain technical conditions it could be become one.

The commission did not explain the reasons why B. Yeltsin himself did not know that somebody was reliably protecting his conversations. It is also just as unclear whether this device is in use at present.

The deputies' staggering incompetence in such a serious and scandalous matter really confirms the idea that the fledgling regime as yet cannot even put its own house in order. It has been decided to hand over this "matter for further examination" to the newly created Russian Security Committee.

Leningrad Committee Rejects TV, Radio Company

LD0603024191 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 2030 GMT 5 Feb 91

[Text] The joint conference of the collective of the Leningrad television and radio broadcasting committee today rejected by an absolute majority the resolution of the last session of the Leningrad City Soviet on turning the committee into a television and radio company. The conference considers that the status of the future company should be defined at talks, with the participation of the all-Union television and radio company, the USSR Ministry for the Press, and the media of our republic, Leningrad City and oblast soviets. Journalists of Lentel-eradio [Leningrad broadcasting company] should also participate. The conference's participants stated that any form of interference with the work of the media is not allowed. The session decisively called any manifestations of this Bolshevism. When glasnost is attacked, the restraints are even tighter than in the bad memories of the stagnation years.

Independent Radio Station Started in Vladivostock

LD0503171691 Moscow MOSCOW NEWS in English No. 7, 17-24 Feb 91 p 2

[Unattributed report: "Vladivistock: Independent Radio"]

[Text] Dmitriy Bryuzgin, a 33-year-old journalist who recently worked for the State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting in the Maritime Territory, now hires his former colleagues, as head of the first private radio station in the Soviet Far East.

The complications of opening such a station are many indeed: it will cost hundreds of thousands of roubles a year to lease technical broadcasting facilities from the USSR Ministry of Communications, and rent studios. The coordination of the request with the KGB and the military authorities to obtain a frequency is likely to face a refusal. The procedure of issuing licences for the opening of TV and radio stations by non-state structures is still unsettled, although in one of his decrees, issued in the summer of 1990, the President gave proper instructions on this score. Under these circumstances the head of independence Radio Vladivostock counts only on wealthy sponsors to whom, as he put it, "it will have to sing praises."

It is noteworthy that after the wave of new unofficial and independent newspapers that flooded newsstands, a new independent information wave—that of radio stations—is rising. The Voice of Asia has transmitted from Chita for one month and the Far East-Russia station began broadcasts to the Khabarovsk Territory from early in February. Meanwhile, the odiose stand of the State Committee for Television and Broadcasting, or to be more exact its Chairman Leonid Kravchenko, who began energetically to squeeze Radio Russia out of his programmes, raises a legitimate question: how long could independent broadcasting in this outlying area last?

Western Republics

Gorbachev Speaks at Mogilev Party Oblast

LD0103150391 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1216 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Speech by President Mikhail Gorbachev at Mogilev Party Oblast and Economic Aktiv in Bykhov, Belorussia on 28 February—recorded]

[Text] This meeting in your oblast here in Bykhov concludes my stay in the republic. Of course, it was short, and I think I need to come here again and again to have time to see more of the republic and to have more meetings and conversations. Though this stay was short, it was very substantive for me in every respect.

The first thing was to check our political watches in a republic, whose people enjoy huge respect among the country's peoples due to their adherence to high fundamental values, due to consistency in their creative activity, and due to their courage and firmness in defending these principled values. The people have more than once in its history had support, they know what it means in times of trials, and the people who are capable of generosity toward others. From all viewpoints, this has been very important for me at this difficult and crucial time when so many troubles have befallen us, as well as the burden of taking the responsibility for adopting fateful decisions which are to change the lives of our country and all peoples for many decades, or even centuries, to come.

I allocated two of my three days to visit the rayons in the [Chernobyl] disaster zone. I considered it to be my moral duty as a human being and, of course, the duty of the leader of the country. Once again, on behalf of the country's leadership and myself, I would like to express my sincere sympathy to the working people of Belorussia, especially to those who live here in these regions, in these rayons, as regards all the trials that became your lot, as well as to all your fellow sufferers in the Ukraine and the Russian Federation.

The trip allowed me to really appreciate what has been done in the past years toward eliminating the aftermath of the accident, and what needs to be done. It is necessary to do this; moreover, a lot should be done in the near future, as the misfortune is such that a decision on resolving it cannot be postponed until some later date, not even for a month, or for a year. One must not postpone it even for a few months.

I welcome the efforts of the republican and oblasts organizations and of all the working people themselves who are taking part in this. I want to say—I have already spoken of this in Gomel Oblast—that there are issues to which the USSR Government and the Supreme Soviet must return. The Supreme Soviet must of course support this idea, which has already been embodied in the law by the Supreme Soviet of your republic, on the social protection of the people who found themselves in this zone. On this basis and this concept, a Union approach has been developed and, taking account of the opinion of the Russians and Ukrainians, a Union law has been drawn up. It is now—a working version is being subjected to expert assessment and will be submitted to the USSR Supreme Soviet. It is necessary that these people are given social protection. What we have begun is vitally necessary to us and to the whole country. That is my first point.

The present state of crisis is not a disaster in itself, but rather a stage on the path toward the rebirth of our society. We have emerged from one system—the total command system, in which everything was prescribed: what nail, with or without a head, must be hammered in in Mogilev, and how many centimetres deep. What sort of leadership is that? How can one, in the framework of such a system, lead a country where dozens of nations live, 15 sovereign republics—300 million people? We cannot live like that, Comrades! Since we have left that system behind and have been late with this, are late, and since our projects are not turning out well, since we lack experience and timing, our political measures are not in agreement with our economic and legal measures, while we do not yet have a new system, and for this reason we are rocked and shaken. But let us show stamina; let us go on and decide more quickly: we have got to shorten this transition period. We simply must cope. Above all we must now stabilize economic ties, because if there is a decline in production it means lower wages and profits and lower budget contributions. That means a breakdown of all our programs, pensions, and so on.

The maintenance of production and work: that is what will become the subject of discussion at the next sessions of the government. Let us stabilize the legal order, cope with crime, halt the buildup of political confrontations, and so on and so on. We properly decide the issue of our Union's destiny if we preserve it by renewing it. We need a strong Union state and not something amorphous that other states will not reckon with. A strong multiethnic Union—and we can have it when we have strong sovereign republics.

Then is this simple dialectic. It has to be done. A draft Union treaty is on its way. All the republics have worked on it and contributed a lot toward it. I think that a stage preparing the resumption of work by the commission on the Constitution and the preparation of a new constitution is beginning. We must push on, surmounting difficulties and economic disintegration. Nevertheless, we have to consistently follow the road of setting up a market economy through reforming the attitude to ownership, denationalization, and going over to a mixed economy. The implementation of measures bringing financial and monetary systems into a healthy state, the continuation of a price reform, and consistent steps toward making the ruble convertible. Everything will be done for the practical confirmation of all forms of economy, demonopolization of the economy, to encourage business undertakings, and the activities of small and medium enterprises. Let every form of economy prove its ability to live, let it compete and prove itself.

We have to involve powerful incentives. The economy, of course, has to be oriented to the people, because we are talking about our socialist choice, where concern for people is the core of attention; but it should not be ideologized, it should be socially orientated. It should be orientated. It should meet our concept of justice, social justice. It should be democratic and addressed to the people. It should give them the possibility to reveal their talents in organizing work and in carrying it out.

This is what we need. I think we should start implementing land reform to create legal economic preconditions for a complete development of all forms of land farming. We intend to implement, on a large scale, a number of significant measures aimed at the structural reorganization of the economy. New opportunities that have arisen should be used to intensify scientific and technical progress. We need a large-scale program. We already have the foundations for converting defense enterprises. Notwithstanding all the difficulties this sector of the economy is going through now, Comrades, we have great opportunities here. We have our best funds there, our best cadres, and our best designers and scientists. They are implementing new high technologies there better than anywhere else. All this has to be used to affect all sectors of the economy. We need new technologies which will help us save resources and bring about an economy of manual labor and different productivity. If it stays the way it is, we will not have that national income and we will squander our labor resources and our great material and natural resources.

We need a legal and judicial reform. Without this we cannot construct a law-governed state. The functioning of all state and public institutions would be lacking in precision. We would not be able to provide the necessary environment in which a person's liberties and rights would be consistently implemented, no matter where he lives and works.

I would like to say that in general it is clear to us what must be done. We do not live in the backwoods of civilization where we are not interested in what is going on around us. No. Such a country as ours is unable to implement its plans without conducting an active and peace-loving foreign policy in order to further stimulate and progress the processes of disarmament, reduce confrontation, and free resources to resolve internal, primarily, social tasks.

Therefore, I reply once again, for the hundredth time to all critics of the foreign policy which is being conducted within the framework of the new thinking—perhaps there are some things which deserve to be criticized, which require some partial corrections, but, in the main, our policy is what the country needs, it is in our interests, and it is welcomed by the peoples. Any attempt to cast doubts on it, to use it, to try to profiteer from it, also comes from those quarters which would once again like to completely reserve everything.

We are in favor of moving over to new structures of regional and global security, of rejecting a security based on a bloc system. We are in favor of collective security, of raising the role of the United Nations, and all these institutions. Even set out in brief like this, the action program shows what large-scale tasks lie ahead of us. We must resolve them all simultaneously. This requires the united efforts of all the healthy forces in society, of all to whom the fate of our fatherland is dear, who are really intersted in the implementation of perestroyka, and who are not just paying lip service to it.

Although I can see that you prefer specific themes, nonetheless in this connection I would like to return to the question of the disposition of political forces. It is very important that we should all try to understand this and draw the correct conclusions. This will determine our policy and our actions. What is at issue, first of all—and you surely can see this and are aware of this, I have also spoken about this—is that of late there has been a radicalization of the positions of all political forces, parties, and movements—a harshening of demands. This has intensified the tendency toward the social disintegration of society and toward civil confrontation.

All this is very serious, Comrades. That is why I return yet again to this topic, after my speech to scientists and the intelligentsia in Minsk. It is with this topic that I began my visit to Belorussia, and it is with this topic that I wish to conclude my visit and to express some more views in order to develop my arguments in favor of what I was saying. Polarization of political forces is bound up with confrontation and conflicts. Coordinated and simultaneous action in three directions can put an end to this process and lessen confrontation, if we act in three directions at once and at the same time: it is the stepping up of practical measures aimed at getting out of the economic crisis, the signing of a new Union treaty without delay, and the setting up of a firm political coalition of centrist forces.

In my view, the development of the situation in the country is objectively accompanied by the centrist political orientation becoming the prevailing and dominant political movement. When interpreting political centrism, one ought to proceed from the fact that it is not a rigidly fixed position, but rather a political space, conditioned by the dynamics of the political process itself, if one talks about it as applicable to our conditions. A genuine centrist position finds a return to stalinism and stagnation unacceptable.

In this sense the successes of any political party, just as its failures, will be defined, first and foremost by whether they are capable of getting the masses to follow them. But a genuinely centrist position also finds unacceptable the adventurism of forces that call themselves radical. This is because they are frequently deprived of a real base, fail to take account of the processes underway in society, and put forward erroneous slogans. Taking into account the unique and extremely contradictory nature of the present political situation, the CPSU simply does not have a right to let the initiative slip in creating a coalition of centrist forces, on the basis of uniting democratic parties and movements which gave priority to the interests of the people, and the platform of which is based upon the internationalist positions and the unity of the Union.

It is necessary to endeavor, by any means, to include the most authoritative part of the workers', trade union, youth, women's, and veterans' movement in this coalition. Political centrism represents a line of political common sense, evenhandedness, and a consistent tackling of problems that have come to a head, in the interests of all the working strata of society. This then is the political essence of this coalition. It is precisely the question of the way in which centrist policy takes account of and expresses the various economic and social interests that is, beyond doubt, the main question from the viewpoint of the attitude toward this policy on the part of various social groups, political parties, and movements.

The centrist policy is a line aimed at consensus and at taking account of the interests that exist objectively in society, within the framework of a genuine socialist renewal. The organic link between this centrist line and everything which is in keeping with the interests of the socialist orientation of the country's development testifies, on the whole, to the patriotic nature of this realistic centrism. It is not a narrow but a relatively broad spectrum of political orientation. In our conditions, it can be limited by the most general but principled criteria with regard to the degree of its socialist content, the interests of progressive social development which is in keeping with the objective state of society, and its historic traditions, morals, and psychological make-up.

Processing from this—I think I will now—listen carefully, I will now tell you something seditious. We all need to reflect on this. I have thought it over and I say it with all consciousness and conviction: the centralist line can and should encompass both the left-centrist and the right-centrist orientation, taking account of their moderate and radical natures. This is because we have not left them unaccounted for, stating that it is only adventurers that are active on the right and on the left. There are leaders there who push themselves and us heaven knows where, some wanting a wholesale return to the old days, others galloping forth without taking account of the realities, the sate of people's minds, and society in general. But there are many healthy forces there. We stated at the 28th congress that we, the party, renounce the monopolistic claim to power and that we are ready to compete with everyone. We have at present gained the upper hand, it is in us that trust is being shown, and we are the ruling party. But while remaining the ruling party, we invite all the patriotic and democratic forces to cooperate and unite in the interests of attaining the goals of perestroyka.

This is what we said and how we must act, because some party organizations, after the 28th congress, forgot about this. This is possible, Comrades, if we can coordinate a balance of various interests which demand the existence of a strong political center.

But in the conditions of our present-day realities, a number of difficulties exist in shaping and uniting centrist-oriented political forces. This must also be seen.

The fact must not be hidden that for many people a centrist position is something akin to a lack of principle, an absence of one's own opinion, even fickle-mindedness [flyugerstvo]. At best, it provides for vagueness or adopting a middle course in political orientation.

Well, I would even say now that in this auditorium there is even... [changes thought] I think that it will even mature. [laughter in hall] One used to say: Let us have a go at it; that is fine, let us do it. But now we say: Let us think about it, let us get together so that we will not again get the blacks, the whites, the reds, the whites, the blues, etc., so that we do not bang our heads together again. This is our whole country, our people! Furthermore, a clash, a confrontation has been taken to such a point, at a stage of the most profound and fateful changes in the life of the country. There are even interests which are higher than the interests of any political party. These are the interests of society, the fundamental interests of the people as a whole.

Just think, Comrades, I do not want you to take it at face value. Think and you will come to the same conclusion I have—convincingly. We must draw attention to the fact that quite a few people are setting a centrist policy against a policy of persistent resolute actions, taking into account the situation of acute crisis in many regions of the country which is badly damaging the standard of living of the working man. It seems, at first glance, that this is incompatible—to have this determination and a suddenly to have centrist position. Thus there is a determination to protect stability, to strengthen stability, to build up cohesion, and to pool these democratic forces who adhere to the goals of perestroyka. That is where determination is necessary, and that is where success lies—not with a to-hell-with-it, tally-ho attitude, according to the methods of 1938 and subsequent years.

In this connection, it is very important to grasp an understanding of the fact that political centrism in no way excludes resolute and radical actions to urgent problems if they are objectively and urgently necessary, and if they can be used objectively in the interests of the majority of society.

The main idea of centrism, at the present time and for the future, is undoubtedly the idea of civil and national harmony. But that idea itself requires us to search for a formula. It is not a harmony without principle—not harmony at any price, but harmony in pursuit of those aims which the majority of people will accept. That is why it now has the moral right and the corresponding political competence to offer a bit of common sense, responsibility, and anxious concern for the fate of our state.

So the formula of national harmony must follow from the proposals of the CPSU and the concept of democratic socialism. It contains sufficiently universal and general democratic demands: a state based on the rule of law, division of powers, a mixed market economy, social justice, rights and liberties, and so on. It is in tune with the interests of the majority of citizens in the country. Also, since these demands are present in one degree or another in the declarations of other political parties and movements, these are points for contact and interaction. We should strive to insure that precisely the CPSU becomes the integrating factor of all centrist forces. To achieve this, it must overcome the centrifugal forces within itself, must become dynamic and open, and must define its position, both with regard to the dogmatic conservative forces advocating socialism without democracy and the liberal-bourgeois forces advocating democracy without socialism. Here a special responsibility will be laid on the Communist legislators, who must not only create a legislative group of their own, but who must also interact with all deputies who are worried about the fate of the country. They are beginning to learn this, and it is bringing a success of its own. That is what we must do. [applause]

Belorussians React to Gorbachev's Speeches

91UN1006A Moscow RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA in Russian 1 Mar 91 p 2

[Report on reactions to Gorbachev's speeches in Belorussia under the "RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA Express Poll" rubric: "Toward Stability and Order—Speech by the Country's President in Belorussia Has Riveted World Public Attention"]

[Text]**V. Litovchenko, docent of the Kemerovo Technological Institute of the Food Industry:**

"With all of perestroyka's shortcomings, intentional or unintentional, I am for Gorbachev. God forbid that the democrats should remove him. This would be like throwing a drum of gasoline onto a bonfire of political and economic instability. The country, not united for a long time, will blaze up into a storm of antagonism. Besides the socialist choice, there is the opposite choice, and there are considerable forces behind it. Therefore the possibility of civil war is not an idle thought, and it is not a myth.

"We especially need Gorbachev under these conditions—as the personification of good sense, civic peace, and international unity. I appeal to sensible forces to unite around the president and to defend the socialist choice."

F. Ridosh, railroad worker:

"I think this is the first time that the president has said from a rostrum that a fierce struggle for authority is going on. How fed up the people are with civil strife! Stability and order are absolutely necessary. Otherwise we will not avoid failure. You see, excuse me, there is already nowhere to buy trousers. Mikhail Sergeyevich has characterized today's condition as a psychological war of various parties and movements that do not have any constructive programs to their name. Why then muddy the waters against the CPSU, which has such a program? And in such a case, on what should the USSR president depend if not on the CPSU?

"Opinions about Mikhail Gorbachev's speech, as, moreover, about Boris Yeltsin, are extremely contradictory, which once again affirms that is absolutely necessary for the country and the people to build civic harmony. To which the USSR president is summoning the people."

Kemorovo Oblast.

B. Belskiy, foreman of assemblers of Ukrenergomontazh specialized Construction and Erection Administration:

"The talk that the country's president, M.S. Gorbachev, held with the residents of Gomel touched all liquidators to the quick. Until Chernobyl, many of us lived in flowering Pripyat. Then in a few hours, leaving behind everything that had been accumulated over the years, we were resettled, and we took part in the elimination of the consequences of the catastrophe from the very first days. No one considered his health, and no one thought about wages. It was necessary to overcome the misfortune. In May 1986 the crew was working on the third unit, and in June we were transferred to the nuclear fuel waste storage site. Later we built sepulchers for the storage of radioactive wastes and decontamination posts, and laid down pipelines. As early as September, 25 and more rem were "present" in me and many of my comrades. We were taken out of the zone, treated, and again returned to the battle. We have been working until now on the needs of the station. We are ill. It was established that Volodya Koval has a radiation affliction, and he is in the hospital all the time.

"And so, almost five years have passed. No we are not without attention. We have been presented decorations, and our status as liquidators has been legalized, with all of the privileges that derive from this. However, we have not yet felt them. We buy vouchers for treatment at our own expense, we do not see the privilege, for example, of acquiring a car, and we were minimally compensated for losses incurred in the resettlement. We were given a non-interest-bearing loan for the acquisition of household utensils. Is it really impossible to write off what remains at the expense of the state? What happened to the tens of millions of rubles that the country gathered for us over this time? Did they sink into the bottomless pockets of the atom-mongers? We are looked at with indifference in the hierarchy, but sometimes we are not seen at all. The same situation was repeated as with the Afghan veterans after their return: But, you simpleton, why did you crawl into that hell? This embitters people, and it sows disappointment and distrust in their hearts.

"It pains us today to work in Chernobyl. Provisions are extremely bad, but, you see, we are at an excavation. But then, our employers from the Scientific Production Association Pripyat set up a sinecure for themselves—they are all sitting on their salaries. If only one would come out to work. The administration itself performed work for 161,000 rubles (R), but it ate up a million in salaries. It is time to stop dividing people into ours and the Ministry of Atomic Energy and Industry and the Ministry of Power and Electrification. Chernobyl needs one boss. Just exactly as it is necessary for everyone to work together to fight against the aftereffects of the accident: Russians, Ukrainians, and Belorussians. Setting people apart here only damages the effort."

Chernobyl.

Relying on the Working Class

"M.S. Gorbachev's speech in Belorussia confirms the efforts of the Soviet leadership to rely on the working class in this country's difficult period," said Manfred Gross, chairman of the left bloc of the Association of Austrian Trade Unions, to RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA correspondent Aleksandr Burdanov. "The workers of Austria are following the development of events in the Soviet Union with concern. Therefore, the meeting of the president with the workers of Minsk and his efforts to normalize the internal political situation in the USSR evoke a positive response among Austrians. M. Gorbachev now needs the support of the Soviet people very much to prevent the collapse of the state," noted M. Gross.

Vienna.

The Press Testifies

"M. Gorbachev's trip to Belorussia is not accidental. The Soviet leader showed that he is determined to lead the country out of the economic, political, and moral crisis and to preserve it as a united state."

Newspaper AFTENPOSTEN (Norway).

Belorussian Decree on Referendum Procedure

91UN1013A Minsk SOVETSKAYA BELORUSSIYA in Russian 29 Jan 91 p 1

[Resolution of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic (SSR) Supreme Soviet Presidium "On Organizing the Preparation for and Conduct of the USSR Referendum on the Issue of Preservation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in the Belorussian SSR"]

[Text] To implement in a timely fashion in the Belorussian SSR measures stipulated by the USSR Supreme Soviet decision of 16 January 1991 "On Organizing the Preparation for and Conduct of the USSR Referendum on the Issue of Preservation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics," and taking as a guidance Article 105 of the Belorussian SSR Constitution (Basic Law), the Belorussian SSR Supreme Soviet Presidium **resolves:**

1. To entrust the powers of the Central Republic Commission on the USSR Referendum in the Belorussian SSR Central Commission on Elections of People's Deputies and to name it—during the period of the referendum—the Belorussian SSR Central Commission of the USSR Referendum.

2. For the Belorussian SSR Central Commission of the USSR Referendum to form the republic districts for conducting the voting on the USSR referendum and to define these districts' boundaries.

3. For the oblast and Minsk city soviets of people's deputies, or their presidiums to form, before 2 February 1991, district commissions on the conduct of USSR referendum.

4. For the rayon, city (except in the cities under rayon jurisdiction), and city rayon soviets of people's deputies, or their presidiums to form, no later than 11 February 1991, voting precincts and to confirm precinct commissions on the USSR referendum.

5. To recommend editorial staffs of newspapers, magazines, radio and television, local soviets of people's deputies, and public associations, to ensure—in a form understandable to broad population masses—comprehensive and objective interpretation of the substance of the referendum question, voting procedures, and the historic importance of the decision taken by the citizens as a result of the voting.

[Signed] Chairman of the Belorussian SSR Supreme Soviet N. Dementey

[Dated] Minsk, 21 January, 1991

Moldova's Mircha Warns Soviets Against Referendum

LD0603230191 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1930 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Local soviets that still hold on their territory the referendum on preserving the USSR, contrary to the decision of the Moldovan legislature, can be dissolved and their oganizers be made answerable, according to the Constitution. Moldovan President Snegur Mircha stated this at a meeting between the leadership of the republic and representatives of local authorities, managers of enterprises, farms, and the media.

He reported that he had made this warning to the leadership of the Moldovan Communist Party, which is conducting propaganda and organizational work on preparing for the referendum. On no account can this be regarded as an attack on democracy, but as a step toward establishing order in the republic. Our nonparticipation in the referendum does not mean at all that we will destroy established ties with Union republics, the Moldovan president stressed. On the contrary, we want to give them a new impetus by way of economic agreements, which have been concluded with practically all of them, but without any dictation.

Moldovan Official on Presidential Power Structure

LD0603181491 Moscow TASS in English 1730 GMT 6 Mar 91

[By MOLDOVA-PRES correspondent Aleksandr Tanas]

[Text] Kishinev March 6 TASS—Alexadru Arseni, chairman of the Moldovan parliament's Commission for Inter-ethnic relations and Human Rights, has described the Moldovan parliament decision of March 5 on the structure of executive presidential power as the first step towards creating the institution of presidential authority.

"A law 'on local self-government', to introduce prefectures and municipalities on the basis of the present city and district councils, will be next and concluding step," Arseni said.

From now on, Moldovan president is the head of executive power in the republic. However, the office of prime minister remains intact. The formation and abolition of ministries and state committees, the appointment of officials and relieving them of their posts is subject to endorsement by the Moldovan parliament.

Arseni believes that the decision to institute presidential authority will lead a considerable cut in the now existing republican apparatus of executive power.

Appeal Addressed to Ukrainians on Union Referendum

LD0603174491 Kiev International Service in Ukrainian 2200 GMT 5 Mar 91

[Excerpt] An appeal by Kiev public officials to the people of Kiev and all citizens of the Ukraine in connection with the 17 March referendum has been promulgated today. The referendum has to determine whether the Soviet Union will or will not exist. The appeal reads in particular, I quote: Naturally, we do not need the Union in its present form. It should be a Union built on the principles of voluntary participation, equal rights, and political, economic, and state sovereignty. [passage omitted]

Politburo's Gurenko at Kiev Seminar on Referendum

PM0403165791 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 2 Mar 91 Second Edition p 2

[UKRINFORM-TASS report under general headline: "Conferences Held"]

[Text] Kiev, 1 Mar—Questions of the preparation for and holding of the all-Union referendum were examined at a conference-seminar of secretaries in charge of the ideological departments of Union republic communist party central committees and republic party committees which ended here today.

The conference-seminar was addressed by S.I. Gurenko, member of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo and first secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party Central Committee.

Kaifu Promises Aid Toward Chernobyl Cleanup

OW0203144491 Moscow in Japanese to Japan 1200 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Text] Japanese Prime Minister Kaifu met with visiting Belorussian Prime Minister Kebich on 28 February, and stated that Japan would offer all-out support for Soviet projects for cleaning up the aftermath of the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant accident.

Moreover, Prime Minister Kaifu noted the Japanese Government's intention to send medical supplies and equipment through the WHO to the areas polluted and damaged in the Chernobyl accident. And then, he added as follows:

In addition to the medical aid, Japan is ready to conclude a bilateral agreement, during President Gorbachev's Japan visit, on facilitating Soviet radiation specialists' training of clinical treatment for radiation injury victims at academic institutes in Japan. In the very near future, people in the disaster area will certainly come to appreciate the aid coming from Japan.

This is what Prime Minister Kaifu stressed to Belorussian Prime Minister Kebich.

At the meeting, both sides confirmed their belief that President Gorbachev's visit to Japan in April would definitely have an impact on improving bilateral relations.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Kebich stressed that Belorussia is capable of becoming a strong economic partner with Japan. Moreover, he briefly explained the political and economic situation in the Soviet Union as a whole and also in various republics.

Ukrainian-Hungarian Cooperation Conference Opens

LD0603130291 Kiev International Service in Ukrainian 2200 GMT 5 Mar 91

[Text] A scientific-technical conference dealing with the development of trade, economic, scientific and technical contacts between organizations, enterprises and banks of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Republic of Hungary opened in Kiev today. The visit to our republic by Hungarian businessmen is connected with the establishment of direct contacts with the Ukraine. Joint bank operations, prospects for creating joint enterprises, development of cooperation in the sphere of construction, and the development of border contacts will be examined at the conference.

Ukraine, Estonia Conclude Trade Agreement

LD0503213191 Tallinn Domestic Service in Estonian 1500 GMT 5 Mar 91

[Text] To further implement the treaty on economic cooperation concluded on 29 November 1990 between the Republic of Estonia and the Ukrainian governments, the republics' governmental delegations have been meeting in Kiev yesterday and today. They have concluded a trade protocol for the current year. On the Ukrainian side the agreement was signed by Viktor Urchukin, deputy chairman of the Ukrainian Coucil of Ministers, and on the Estonian side by Aleksander Sikkal, chairman of the republican government's trade committee and minister for material resources.

In line with the addenda to the trade protocols, the list of the most important goods to be procured in 1991 and their quantities were determined. Thus the Ukrainian Government has taken upon itself the obligation to procure goods for Estonia from enterprises located on the Ukrainian territory, mainly at 1990 levels. Among the items to be procured are ferrous metal, [words indistinct] tires for autos and trucks, sugar, salt, vehicles, excavators, tractors, and bulldozers. The Estonian side has undertaken the obligation to procure for the Ukraine scrap metal, paper bags, cotton fabric and other goods. No agreement was achieved on some goods. Further talks will continue in April, when a Ukrainian delegation will visit Tallinn.

The subject of opening an Estonian trade representation in Kiev was also discussed.

Caucasus

Armenia To Appeal USSR Acts on Nagorno-Karabakh

NC0603140291 Yerevan ARMENPRES International Service in Armenian 1215 GMT 4 Mar 91

[Text] The Armenian Republic's Supreme Soviet has adopted a decision to appeal to the USSR Constitutional Oversight Committee questioning the compatibility of certain acts of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium on Nagorno-Karabakh with the USSR Constitution and USSR laws.

The Armenian Republic's Supreme Soviet considers that Paragraph 3 of Article 1 of the 12 January 1989 decree of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium "On the Introduction of Special Administration Form in the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast of the Azerbaijan SSR [Soviet Socialist Republic]," and point 3 of the 28 November 1989 decision of the USSR Supreme Soviet "On Measures To Normalize the Situation in the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast" are incompatible with the USSR Constitution.

Azerbaijan Supreme Soviet Meeting Detailed

NC0703115791 Baku Domestic Service in Azeri 1700 GMT 5 Mar 91

[Text] The second stage of the first session of the Azerbaijan Supreme Soviet began its work today. Eleven items have been included on the agenda:

1. Draft law on the amendments and additions to the republic's constitution for consolidating the state administration system in the republic.
2. Proposals made by the republic's president on the structure and establishment of the republic's Council of Ministers.
3. Azerbaijan's law on the question of a referendum.
4. Azerbaijan's participation in the USSR referendum on 17 March 1991.
5. Azerbaijan's state plan for economic and social development in 1991.
6. Azerbaijan's state budget for 1991 and the report on the realization of the budget for 1989.
7. Draft law on the status of the Azerbaijan people's deputies.
8. Draft law on the status of the people's deputies of the Azerbaijan local soviets.
9. Draft law on constitutional control in Azerbaijan.
10. Measures aimed at normalizing the situation in the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast.
11. Other matters.

El'mira Kafarova, chairwoman of the Azerbaijan Supreme Soviet, chaired the meeting.

The convocation heard and debated a report by Deputy Mamed [name indistinct], chairman of the Supreme Soviet Commission on Legislation, Jurisprudence, and the Rights of the Citizens, on the first item of the agenda. Several proposals were made about the draft law on the matter. The question of whether a need exists to maintain the Committee for People's Control was discussed at length. This matter was put to a vote, and the republic's Committee for People's Control was abolished. The vote was unanimous. Significant amendments were made to many of the provisions of the republic's constitution. A draft law was enacted to have the amendments and the changes approved. The deputies later began to debate the republic's draft law on the question of a referendum. Deputy Miraga Yasharkuliyev's report was heard on the matter. The deputies made several changes in the draft law and put forward proposals. The Supreme Soviet enacted the republic's law on the question of a referendum.

The 12th convocation will continue its work with the meetings that will be held by the permanent commissions of the Azerbaijan Supreme Soviet on 6 March.

President Ayaz Mutalibov participated in the work of the meeting.

First Congress of Azerbaijan Free Trade Union

NC0703115691 Baku Domestic Service in Azeri 1700 GMT 4 Mar 91

[Text] The republic-level trade union of the workers affiliated with the cooperatives and the other establishments under free ownership has held its first congress. The delegates, who represented 100,000 workers employed in various non-state economic establishments, approved the report on the work done by the trade union's committee since the (?founding) meeting, established the tasks for the future, elected the members of the republic-level committee of the trade union and the members of the auditing commission, and approved the trade union's rules and regulations. The convocation adopted a resolution and an appeal to the president of Azerbaijan and to all the workers who are employed by the cooperatives.

(?Lerm), president of the All-Union Confederation of the Trade Unions of the USSR Cooperatives and Establishments Under Free Ownership, and Rizayev, his secretary, participated in the work of the congress.

Azerbaijan to Celebrate Iranian New Year Festival

LD0603222491 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 2030 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] The Movement of the Soviet Republic of Azarbaijan has announced as an official holiday 21 March, the New Year festival.

Acording to an IRNA report, the Soviet Republc of Azarbaijan parliament reiterated that the New Year festival is a national festival and approved a special commission be set up in Baku to celebrate that festival as magnificently as possible.

Smuggling on Azerbaijan-Iranian Border Noted

NC0603115691 Baku Domestic Service in Azeri 1700 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Text] It has been nearly six months since simplified rules for border crossings were put into effect in Dzhul'fa. More than 23,000 people have crossed the border in both directions during this period. However, problems have not decreased.

In a statement to an AZERINFORM correspondent, Aliyev, director of the border customs office in Dzhul'fa, said the following:

The customs office in Dzhul'fa, which has existed for 150 years, has worked very hard during the past few months. As a result of the simplified rules, an estimated 300 individuals cross into the Islamic Republic of Iran and a similar number of individuals cross into Azerbaijan from that country every week. This is a gratifying situation. The people are now able to meet after many years of separation. However, the problems in the organization of the border crossings continue to create a state of uneasiness. The people have been allowed to carry gifts worth 10 rubles. They have also been allowed to have 30 rubles in cash. However, the travelers do not convert their cash. Let us be realistic. Nothing can be bought in our shops for 10 rubles at the present time. Consequently, laws are being breached. For example, more than 40 smuggling cases were registered in 1990 and more than 10 from January to February 1991. These cases were mainly related to the smuggling of hard currency; that is, from 200 to 3,000 rubles.

I am not trying to exonerate the people who have been involved in the smuggling. However, you tell me why Soviet citizens, who can travel with gifts only worth up to 10 rubles in their hands and with 30 rubles in their pockets, are allowed to bring back goods worth 500 rubles? Explaining this situation is impossible because it is illogical. The Ministry of Finance and the other pertinent organizations must consider this matter.

Baku Telephone Links With Iran To Be Increased

NC0703114291 Baku Domestic Service in Azeri 1700 GMT 4 Mar 91

[Text] People who make reservations for urgent telephone calls to Iran know that they have to wait for weeks. This situation will completely change in the future. The Azerbaijan Ministry of Communications has concluded an agreement with the Islamic Republic of Iran's Ministry of Transport and Communications for additional telephone links between the two countries. The agreement was signed during the visit of a delegation of Azerbaijan's communications representatives to Iran. Musayev, Azerbaijan minister of communications, headed the delegation.

The problem was serious because there are only three communications lines between Azerbaijan and Iran. This has not been sufficient to meet the increasing demand. The first initiative was made when the delegation of communications representatives visited Iran. Uninterrupted communications links were established between Baku and Tabriz and Baku and Ardabil. According to the agreement, Gendzha and Astara will also be able to establish communications links with Tabriz and Ardabil in Iran by the end of March. The number of the telephone links will be increased to 10 by the end of March and to 60 by June 1991.

Georgian Legislature Issues Appeal to S. Ossetia

LD0603152991 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1400 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] The Georgian legislature has made an appeal to the population of South Ossetia. The program for putting an end to the crisis in this region was presented in the name of the Georgian Supreme Soviet by its chairman, Gamsakhurdia.

In the appeal to the population of South Ossetia, the main condition put forward is the surrender of weapons by all illegal militarized units. The second condition in order of importance is the setting up of legitimate authority in Tskhinvali.

In this respect, it is emphasized that the former oblast structure of the autonomous entity which has now been abolished will not be countenanced. In addition to this, all rights for Ossetians to the cultural autonomy they possessed at the time of the oblast's existence are to be preserved. Here the holding of municipal elections and the establishment of a prefecture is envisaged. In connection with this, it is pointed out that a prefect needs to be appointed to Tskhinvali who will be supported by the majority of both the Georgian and Ossetian populations.

The document states that all of this will enable the Georgian parliament to restore peace and stability to the region in the near future.

Update on Situation in S. Ossetia

LD0603225291 Moscow TASS in English 2137 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow March 7 TASS—Tension in South Ossetia—Georgia's region whose autonomy the Georgian parliament abolished on December 11, last year—escalated on Tuesday night.

TASS correspondent Albert Kochetkov reports from Tskhinvali that a Georgian militia post at the entrance of the city was fired upon from automatic weapons until Wednesday morning.

Georgian Interior Ministry personnel, who are in duty in Tamarasheni village, were also fired upon. According to a report by the Republican Interior Ministry's press centre, there were no killed or wounded.

Among militants from the Ossetian side, there are people who arrived from other regions of the country, ministry spokesmen maintain. Several such militants bearing firearms were apprehended earlier.

A report has also come in that a tourist camp, where units of USSR Interior Ministry troops in Tskhinvali are stationed, was also fired upon Tuesday night. Proceeding from the fact that there is no Georgian militia in the city itself and that its territory is controled by the Ossetian side, an attempt to draw Interior Ministry troops into the gory conflict is manifest.

According to a report by a TASS correspondent from Vladikavkaz (North Ossetia) referring to the press centre of the emergency committee under the authority of the North Ossetian parliament president, refugees from South Ossetia relate that Georgian militants are busy marauding, forcing their way into houses at night and conducting searches, demanding pay-offs amounting to up to 10,000 roubles from every family. Should a family fail to meet the terms, bandits threaten to burn the house down.

The SAKINFORM News Agency reported from Tbilisi that the Georgian parliament Presidium mentioned complete and unconditional disarming of all unlawful paramilitary groups as the first and indispensable condition for the restoration of peace between the Ossetian and Georgian peoples.

In an address to the Ossetian population, published on Wednesday, the Georgian parliament presidium called for the establishment of a "legitimate authority in Tskhinvali". In the process, all cultural autonomy rights which the Ossetians had during the existence the autonomous region will be preserved, the address says. Later on Wednesday a large group of Ossetians who reside in Georgia left Tbilisi for Tskhinvali on a peace mission.

There have appeared "certain prerequisites for positive changes" towards a settlement of the conflict, Soviet vice-president Gennady Yanayev told the USSR parliament session on Wednesday.

He said the number of refugees from the region now totals about 21,000. The number of casualties is growing, too. Thirty-seven people—20 Georgians and 17 Ossetians—have been killed since the flare-up of the conflict.

An actual number of victims is apparently larger than that: There is no information from remote villagers, Yanayev said.

Ossetian Peace Rally in Tskhinvali

AU0703111491 Tbilisi Domestic Service in Georgian 0300 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] Yesterday, several hundred representatives of Ossetians living in different parts of Georgia arrived in Tskhinvali. They organized a meeting at the entrance to the town. At the meeting, they called for an immediate end to the bloodshed, and insisted that those responsible for creating the conflict be brought to account and that practical steps be taken in order to restore peace in Samachablo [South Ossetia]. Thereafter, those participating in the meeting entered the town and discussed with representatives of Tskhinvali's Ossetian population the necessity of resolving the conflict by peaceful means in accordance with the interests of both the Georgians and Ossetians and as emphasized by Zviad Gamsakhurdia, chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Georgia, in his address to the Ossetian population living in Shida Kartli [area of Georgia into which South Ossetia has been incorporated by the Georgian government] and in the town of Tskhinvali.

Biased Information on Samachablo Claimed

AU0603191991 Tbilisi Domestic Service in Russian 1530 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] About the situation in Tskhinvali. The attacks of the gangs of Ossetian extremists, especially those that have arrived here from different parts of the country, against the Georgian militia and the peaceful Georgian population of Samachablo [South Ossetia] are becoming increasingly provocative and blatant. From 2000 GMT on 5 March until 0300 GMT on 6 March, they were firing with submachine guns and machine guns on the Georgian militia post near the entrance to Tskhinvali and on the village of Tamarasheni. At the same time, the central press and television are doing their best to conceal the facts of the attacks by the Ossetian extremists against the USSR Interior Ministry internal troops. However, nobody can conceal the truth. On 6 March, throughout the night, units of the internal troops were subjected to shooting from the Tskhinvali stadium. It is known that there are neither Georgian militia nor Georgian militants in that city.

We now give the floor to the journalist (?Kamal Gamduladze). He will comment on the information about the situation in Samachablo as published in today's PRAVDA and IZVESTIYA.

[Gamduladze] Let us start with the article in IZVESTIYA. It is entitled "Shooting is Still Under Way in South Ossetia". Here is the text:

Electricity is being supplied to Tskhinvali irregularly. As a result of the absence of raw materials and electricity, industrial enterprises are standing idle. It is still dangerous to go into the street in the evening and at night. [passage indistinct] Firing with different weapons including submachine guns continues. On 4 March, [words indistinct] two wounded Ossetians were brought to a Tskhinvali hospital. The body of an Ossetian who died from his wounds was taken to the town of Gori. [Words indistinct] 1137 refugees, mainly residents of the Tskhinvali and Znauri rayons. One day earlier, also during the night, the house of a local resident of Georgian nationality was burned down. The bridge in the area of [name indistinct] was destroyed. The explosion caused the blockage of one of the mountain roads.

Well, war is war. Some people get killed and some wounded. A bridge may even be blown up and a mountain road may be blocked due to the explosion. A house was burned down, although it belonged to a Georgian. [Words indistinct] The conclusion that follows is that the victims are Ossetians. Moreover, I would like to ask the author of this information, the editor of the newspaper, and the journalists that have prepared this issue of IZVESTIYA: Are there many cities in the Soviet Union that have an uninterrupted supply of electricity and water and in which enterprises do not stand idle as a result of the absence of raw and other materials? However, precisely this sentence appeared at the beginning of the report, and, of course, the readers are expected to guess that the Georgians are to blame.

It is impossible to read without emotion the material prepared by Viktor Kozhemyako about the [word indistinct] and cruelty. It is true that this publication appeared under the rubric Notes on the Occasion. This information is quite lengthy, and that is why we have decided to quote in our review only that part of it which pertains directly to Samachablo. Let us hear what Viktor Kozhemyako is writing.

I quote: On one of these days, I read a telegram from South Ossetia that was signed by the head physician of the oblast ambulance station [name indistinct] and another 52 of its workers. [passage indistinct] To bring him to the oblast hospital, an ambulance team was called. During the ride, the car was stopped by people of Georgian nationality. The doctor was beaten up, [word indistinct], as well as the driver. [word indistinct] rushed into the car and began to beat the patient with the butt of the submachine gun and then shot him dead. The patient was accompanied by his 15-year-old son.

Now, I will quote from the text of the telegram word for word: Under the threat of firearms, [words indistinct] the barrels of the submachine guns, he was forced to swallow pieces of smashed glass. Just imagine, I believe that even the Gestapo or the Gulag butchers did not hit upon such an idea. All this is happening (what an absurd paradox!) in the republic of Georgia, which has declared itself democratic and whose leader suffered in the past for his democratic convictions. Now he is not infrequently making statements in the press and on the television [word indistinct]. However, how do the principles of justice declared by him compare with what is taking place in the South Ossetian Autonomous Oblast? When I see people dying [words indistinct] in hospitals and maternity wards in Tskhinvali, I cannot help thinking that [words indistinct]. We want to build a law-governed civil society. For this we need, first and foremost, civic [words indistinct]. This can hardly be achieved in the atmosphere of [words indistinct] and hatred. No, we must not allow further escalation of cruelty and violence. [passage indistinct]

Today, we contacted Avalian (?Gugulashvili) the leader of [words indistinct]. [Words indistinct] said that a similar thing did take place. A Georgian militia post tried to stop an ambulance car but [words indistinct] did not obey the order. The warning shots were answered by firing from the ambulance.

[Passage indistinct] telegram that was received by the PRAVDA editorial board and that was signed by the head physician of the ambulance station and another 52 of its workers. I would like to know why they are talking about something they did not see.

Chanturia Seeks To 'Compromise' Government

AU0503153691 Tbilisi SHVIDI DRE in Georgian 22 Feb 91 p 2

[Article by Zviad Koridze: "Giorgi Chanturia: 'Our Aim is to Compromise the Supreme Soviet in the Eyes of the People'"]

[Text] The news conference given by Mr. Giorgi Chanturia, chairman of the National Democratic Party of Georgia, that was held in the "Tsodna" society's conference hall lasted three hours. It is no secret that the conference, for the most part, was given over to an examination of those problems that are connected with the existing conflict between Mr. Zviad Gamsakhurdia and Mr. Giorgi Chanturia. At times, the debate came close to exceeding ethical norms, although what particularly interested us were the views of the leader of the National Democratic Party on the political situation that has been created in Georgia today.

Mr. Giorgi Chanturia proposed two ways of resolving the crisis in Samachablo [South Ossetia]. The first is to restore the status quo (the two sides would revoke their own decisions and the South Ossetian Autonomous Oblast would be reestablished). He said that this would be a good resolution were it not too late but, today, a restoration of the status quo signifies a retreat. The second is to abolish the state of emergency in Samachablo and, as a last resort, remove paragraph 11 from the resolution that legalizes the activities of USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs internal troops in the region during the period of the state of emergency. In connection with Abkhazia, he pointed out that all the laws and resolutions passed by the Supreme Soviet of the Abkhaz Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic that take priority over Georgian laws should be rescinded, prefects should not be appointed in Abkhazia (not even in Gali rayon), and it is essential to find common ground with those new Abkhazian democratic forces that are aligned against Georgia, though not from a communist but from an Abkhazian standpoint.

Giorgi Chanturia explained that, today, in Georgia, the political, moral, and physical destruction of the National Movement is in process. According to information he gave at the press conference, 67 persons have already been arrested in Georgia: some of these are members of the "Sakartvelo Mkhedrioni" and others are members of the National Democratic Party. They also include a priest from Telavi. Zaza Vepkhvadze [deputy leader of the Mkhedrioni] has been put in Ortachala prison but it is not known where Dzaba Ioseliani has been imprisoned; it is thought that, perhaps, he has been sent to Moscow.

With regard to the protest action planned for 23 February outside the headquarters of the Transcaucasian Military District [MD], the chairman of the National Democratic Party had the following to say: "I welcome all actions of protest directed against the occupational troops but, today, in view of the fact that the [Georgian] Supreme Soviet is preparing an ambush in order to see blood spilled, I oppose this protest action. We should not prepare a ready-made scenario for Gamsakhurdia and Patrikeyev [commander of the Trancaucasian MD]. I see nothing alarming in the protest action being held outside the cinema building."

"It would be short-sighted on our part to blame the present Supreme Soviet for our economic crisis. This has come about as a result of 70 years under a communist regime." In talking about economic problems, Mr. Giorgi Chanturia added that "the point is that the Supreme Soviet does not want to conclude contracts with republics and firms. The course that it is pursuing with regard to the conclusion of economic treaties also has a political aspect attached to it. We are advancing toward the Union treaty. All the Supreme Soviets, including that of Georgia, are being summoned in this direction. The provocative attacks by the Army in Lithuania have caused the entire Lithuanian people, including even the irreconcilable radical opposition, to unite around the [Lithuanian] Supreme Council. The

Kremlin can see that the actions of its puppet government are failing in Georgia," stated the chairman of the National Democratic Party.

In answer to the question as to what would be his party's program of action in the near future, Mr. Giorgi Chanturia said the following: "We must not forget that the struggle with the Kremlin, the army of occupation, and the Georgian Supreme Soviet is one and the same. Our aim is to compromise the Supreme Soviet in the eyes of the people. There should be new elections in which we, as the irreconcilable opposition, will again not participate but will support all honest national forces."

P.S. We have just been informed that Dzaba Ioseliani will be put on trial in Tbilisi.

Central Asia

Kazakh Legislature Approves Law on Amnesty

LD0603175691 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1600 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] In connection with the proclamation of state sovereignty adopted by the Kazakh legislature, the republic's supreme soviet has approved the law on amnesty.

People who helped defend the homeland, order and medal recipients, pregnant women, women with underaged children, and those eligible for pensions qualify for release, irrespective of their term of punishment.

Those who have been sentenced for the first time for a period of up to five years, and women and minors who have served no less than one-third of their punishment will be released.

Cases from this category of people which have not been examined by the time this law comes into force will be closed.

Amnesty is not being applied to criminals who have committed serious crimes, to recidivists who break prison rules, and so forth.

Kyrgystan Supreme Soviet Discusses Referendum

LD0603200291 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1400 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] It is clear that at present there is nothing more important or more necessary, and at the same time more alarming and unpredictable for us, than the answer to the question which is posed on 17 March with the referendum on the fate of the USSR. Although there are still 10 days to go, passions are already boiling over. The Kyrgystan Supreme Soviet Presidium has been examining the preparations for the referendum.

The constituency polling station commissions have already been established and the necessary documents are being prepared. It was also noted that work to clarify the aims and tasks of the upcoming referendum is not being carried out everywhere to the required level. Representatives of the Democratic Movement of Kyrgystan [Demokraticheskoye Dvizheniye Kyrgystana] have proposed putting the question in a new way on the voting paper for the secret vote, by which the question should not be about the preservation of the USSR, but about the creation of a principally new Union of free sovereign states.

Tajik CP Abolishes Party History Institute

LD0503104591 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 0500 GMT 5 Mar 91

[Text] The Tajik Communist Party [CP] Central Committee Bureau has decided to abolish the 40-year-old institute of the republican CP's history. The Institute of Political Studies is now being set up based on the scientific structure that has been abolished. [sentence as heard] The Institute of the Tajik CP's History was the last of 17 similar scientific institutions which existed in the country until very recently.

Dushanbe Introduces Food Rationing System

PM0603135991 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 1 Mar 91 Union Edition p 2

[Report by Aleksandr Karpov under the "Direct Line" rubric: "Coupons in Dushanbe Now, Too"]

[Text] Dushanbe—The ration coupon "wave" has now reached the Tajik capital.

A coupon system has been introduced in Dushanbe now, too. The city soviet executive committee has adopted a decision to regulate the sale of foodstuffs. The reason—many local enterprises and their suppliers have cut back production. In the past year alone, the supply of goods to the city's trade network was 30 million rubles [R] below target. This, of course, has triggered panic buying. As a result, in the free trade system some refrigerators are packed solid while others are empty.

According to the identity cards being introduced on 1 March, there will be an allocation of 800 grams of meat, 600 grams of sausage, 200 grams of butter, 500 grams of vegetable oil, 1.5 kg of sugar, 5 kg of top-grade flour, and seven eggs per member of a family a month. Quotas have not been introduced for the remaining products at the moment and they will be sold without restriction. But the miserly norms for the most essential products indicate that Dushanbe's residents will have to tighten their belts.

Poll Says Most Turkmenians Favor Retaining USSR

LD0603142791 Moscow World Service in English 1200 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Excerpt] Most of the population in Turkmenia are for preserving the USSR. This is borne out by the latest public opinion poll taken in that Central Asian republic, in connection with the referendum on the future of the USSR to be held on Sunday next week. Many of the residents believe that political stability in Turkmenia is closely connected with preserving the country's integrity. [passage omitted]

Turkmenistan, Iran Sign Cooperation Agreement

LD0103075191 Moscow TASS in English 0728 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Text] Ashkhabad March 1 TASS—Turkmenian enterprises on Thursday signed an agreement on economic, scientific, and technical cooperation with Iranian firms. The agreement was signed on the results of a two-day visit in Turkmenia, a Soviet Central Asia republic, by an Iranian business delegation, led by Horosan Province General Director for Economic Issues Ahmadi.

Products by the two countries' industrial enterprises and corporations were displayed at a joint commercial exhibition in Ashkhabad. During the exhibition, mutually advantageous contracts were signed. The sides also discussed prospects for economic cooperation.

"The establishment of mutually advantageous contacts will help develop our republics," Ahmadi told TASS. "We are satisfied with the work done. We agreed to set up several joint ventures in the light industry and processing agricultural products."